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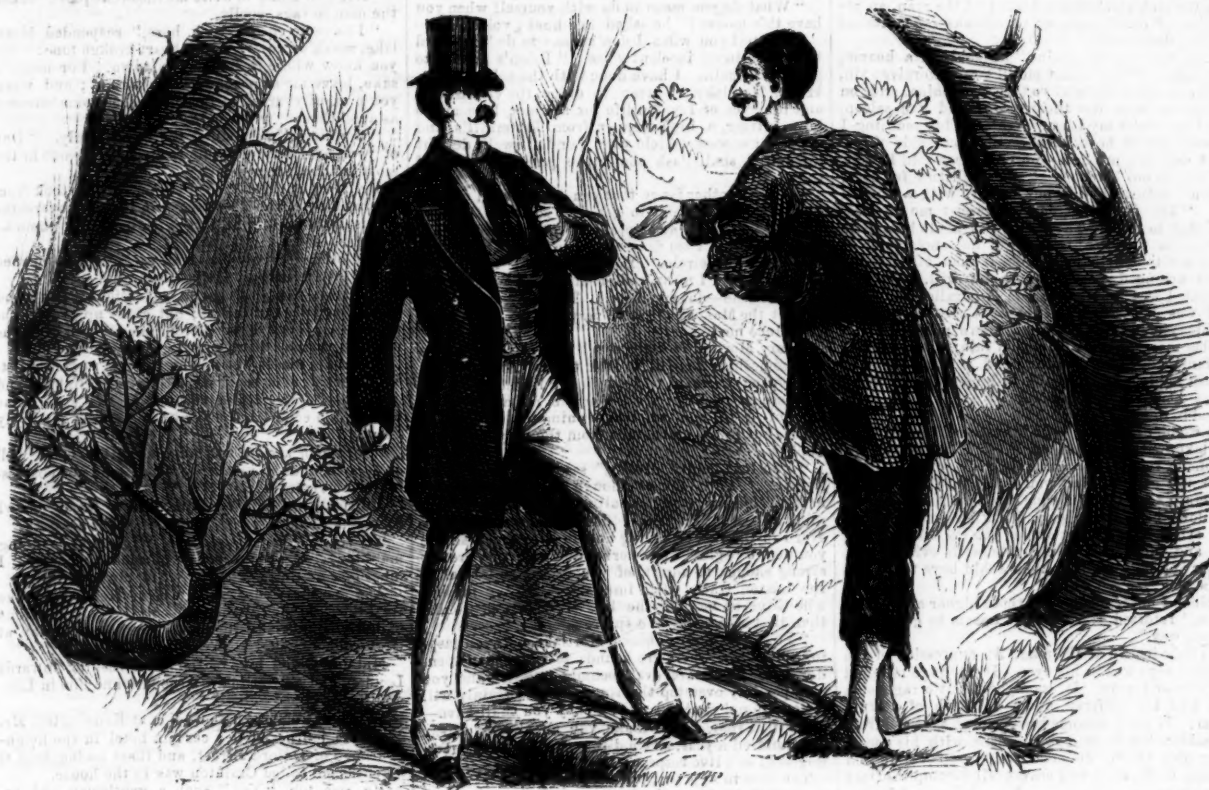
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[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

No. 708.—VOL. XXVIII.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 25, 1876.

[PRICE ONE PENNY]



[HIS EVIL GENIUS.]

THE MISER'S HEIR.

CHAPTER IV.

Through the hushed air the whitening shower
descends,
At first thin wavering, till at last the flakes
Fall broad, and wide, and fast, dimming the day.

MR. HENRY MORTLAKE was a very rich man; he was in the very prime and strength of life, being forty-one years old. His health was admirable, his constitution strong; he was highly gifted with intellect, and his intellect had been well cultivated; he was, besides, gifted with other qualities which served more for ornament, and which are rarely found united with a coarse or cruel nature.

Mr. Mortlake was something of a musician, a poet, and a painter. True, he was but an amateur in any of these arts; he was wont to call himself a mere dabbler with the paint brush, a scribbler with the pen, and a strummer upon various instruments; but in speaking thus contemptuously of his own performances, Mr. Mortlake was guilty of injustice towards himself, for his compositions in music were weird and original, the words which he wrote to his songs were full of pathos and passion, and his own performance of his own music was really admirable—his touch was fine and skilful, his voice true and sweet.

Then although Mr. Mortlake only painted in water colours, his landscapes were remarkable for the delicacy of their colouring—the truth of their distances, and the poetical, half dreamy atmosphere which always surrounded them.

In the choice of subjects he seemed to be guided by a truly artistic instinct.

When we add to all these advantages and accomplishments, that Mr. Mortlake was a tall, well-grown man, with white teeth, abundance of dark hair of his own, a face lighted up by a pair of intelligent

eyes, and altogether an appearance of being much younger than his real age, it cannot be considered surprising if he were regarded complacently by the fair sex in general, and if many mamma's, and even a few Belgravian ones, angled for him for their daughters.

The golden fish, however, was hankering after another bait. Never was man more hopelessly, more desperately in love than Henry Mortlake.

He went and lay down on the bed in the room which was appointed for him after his conference with Roger had ended. Daylight was breaking, and with Roger had ended.

Daylight was breaking, and Mortlake, weary and excited, slept for a couple of hours.

He was awakened by the red October sunshine streaming full upon his eyes, for he had omitted to pull down his blind, and the clock over the stable archway was striking eight.

So Mr. Mortlake arose, refreshed himself with washing, arranged his disordered hair artistically, for all toilette conveniences had been provided for him, and then he put on his hat, crept down the great staircase, and found his way out into the grounds.

The morning was very fresh and beautiful after the rain, the trees in the shrubbery were decked in their red and golden autumn livery, and the rain-drops of the night before glittered brilliantly upon the branches.

There was a great deal of wood about Greywold, and old Martin had an intense objection to lopping off a single bough; so that when one wandered through the shrubbery it was as though one were in the very heart of some wild thicket, miles away from cultivation and the care of the woodman.

The grass grew thick and long and rank in the paths.

Mortlake trampled it down, and walked on recklessly. Presently he heard a voice say:

"Hallo! whither so fast, my fine gentleman?"

He started and looked about, but he could perceive no one, and he fancied that his imagination had

played him some trick. He had been excessively excited the night before by his interview with the miser's heir; his head ached, which was the natural result of the cigars he had smoked and the brandy he had drunk, and he muttered to himself:

"I shall become as great an idiot as my friend Roger, if I suffer him to lead me as he has been leading me for this last week. I'll go towards the house; perhaps breakfast is ready, and a strong cup of tea may make me all right again."

So Mr. Mortlake began to trample down the wet grass in another direction to that in which he had trampled it already. But he had not proceeded far before he heard the same voice again.

"You are in a hurry this bright morning, sir," cried the mocking voice, "but you shall hardly escape to your grand friends before you have listened to a few words which I must speak to you."

At this time the voice seemed to come from the branches of a large sycamore tree, whose leaves blazed scarlet and gold in the sunshine.

Numbers of them, indeed, lay heaped at the feet of Mortlake. He glanced up among the boughs with a sort of nervous gesture, and a spasmodic thrill seemed to pass through his whole frame when he perceived the figure of a man sitting upon a large bough, and staring at him with a great pair of mocking eyes whose expression was certainly satanic.

The man's age it was difficult to guess at. He had one of those lean physiognomies with a smooth, pale skin drawn so tightly across the features and forehead that there was no possibility of wrinkles.

He wore no whiskers, but a thick moustache, jet black; his hair was of the same colour, clipped very close to his head; his nose was sharp, his lips were thin; altogether it was a somewhat vulture-like physiognomy.

The man's frame was slight and excessively muscular.

He came sliding down the stem of the tree, like a schoolboy who has been learning gymnastics, and alighted on the wet grass by the side of Mortlake so

suddenly that the stockbroker started. His dark face grew a shade paler.

The man from the tree burst into a mocking laugh.

"You are afraid," he said, in a tone of contempt. "You are not the only gentleman who has had nervous qualms regarding my august self. I have frightened many a braver man than you are, good Henry."

The satanic laughter of the new comer rang through the wood.

As the rich stockbroker looked at the man, an expression of deadly, almost murderous rage, crossed his pale, dark face.

"You are my evil genius," he said, in a hoarse, deep voice. "You haunt me like an unforgiven sin. Two years ago I thought you were in China, and, on my return from the theatre, I found you asleep, coiled up under my library table. This morning I believed you to have been at the other side of the world, and you are here—here, in Greywold Park?"

"You do not know my strange facilities for locomotion," returned the new-comer, with a wicked leer. "The powers of darkness assist me in a remarkable manner. This world has made but little progress in the great science of demonology, or it would not take half the trouble it does take to get things arranged according to its will. Do you think I was in the bush in Australia, did you? So I was last week; yet behold me in the full pursuit of an English gentleman's manner, on an October morning after a flight of rain, in full pursuit of Henry Mortlake, Esquire; and you are come out to meet me in a most amiable fashion, as if you knew I were here. Nothing could have happened more agreeable to me."

"I wonder how long your bravado will last," said Mortlake, with a bitter smile. "I believe if the hangman's rope were round your neck, and you stood under the gallows, that you would insult chaplains, wardens, executioners, spring up into the air, then sink down beneath the ground in a flash of fire before their eyes. You are not a man, you are a demon, and flesh and blood cannot compete with evil spirits. Higher and better spirits alone could have the power to cow you."

"Since I never meet with those higher and better spirits," retorted the other, "I seem to get things my own way."

Mortlake looked at the man. An expression of the deadliest rage was in his eyes. It was rage mingled with fear and pain. It was the frantic rage of a slave who has suffered under the lash of a cruel master. It was a strange look, coming as it did from the fashionably dressed stockbroker, with his gorgeous golden chain, diamond pin, worth a hundred guineas, boots, coat, and cravat, all triumphs of art in their way.

It was a strange look, we repeat, when coupled with this elegant attire and splendid jewellery, considering that it was not directed towards a superior or an equal, but towards an evil-looking being, whose sinister face, clever as it was, had evidently not come into contact with soap or clean water for days, whose feet were bare, who was clothed in rags, nay, upon whose haggard visage was impressed the stamp of hunger itself. Still the look which the rich man cast upon the tramp was the look of a terrified yet enraged slave, while the look which the tramp cast upon the rich man was that of an insolent, cruel, and triumphant master.

"You seem to get things your own way," said Mortlake, speaking after the other. "That is true, but they do not profit you, do they? It is the old story, Satan pays his votaries with diamonds of a wonderful size and water: but one day the deluded wretch finds that they are only common pebble stones after all."

"They have served the purpose of diamonds for a time, at any rate," rejoined the other. "Only three months ago I was living in splendid apartments in a great city. I had carriages, horses, and liveried servants; I wore a diamond in my stock as big, bright, and precious as the one you now sport; my pockets were full of gold; my dinners and my wines were considered of the best—and now look at me! I am hatless, coatless, and shoeless; I have nowhere to sleep, unless I can be fortunate enough to find my way into a barn or outhouse. I have eaten nothing since yesterday morning except a dish of cold potatoes, and I have not seen the colour of a sixpence for ten days; and yet—"

Here the man snapped his fingers and leaped up into the air.

"I care nothing for all this, because I knew and know it is only a question of time; my banker was ready for me if I could only reach him soon enough, and I left no stone unturned until I was enabled to present myself before you. There is no need for me to say another word, my condition speaks for itself; so please to give me a cheque for two thousand pounds at once. Besides that, I want ten pounds in

hand for immediate necessity, two pounds in silver, if you can oblige me. I don't want to show gold or cheque until I can get into a respectable suit of clothes. Be as quick about it as you can, for I am in a hurry."

The cool insolence of the man's tone it is impossible to convey in printed words.

Mortlake glared at him savagely; then he looked all round as if he were searching for some weapon with which he could have felled his tormentor to the ground.

"What do you mean to do with yourself when you have this money?" he asked in a husky voice.

"I'll tell you what I don't mean to do," retorted the other, in an insolent voice; "I don't intend to go abroad again. I have done with the colonies, Mr. Henry Mortlake. I mean to enjoy the civilization and luxuries of London life for a time; I mean to have a tiger, a high-stepper from Tatterhall's, and whatever newest vehicle your London swells delight in, and I shall dash about the park like any of them."

"I have another fancy that you will be kind enough to grant me; I mean to get into some of the best society. English aristocracy is so wonderfully exclusive, and so I am determined to penetrate within the charmed circle. You have done it by dint of wealth, and I mean to do it also; and so you must introduce me—do you hear? They say the girl up here at the Manor has grown very pretty. You must introduce me to her."

Henry Mortlake's face grew livid. His ghostlike was something fearful to look upon. An imaginative person would have seen in it a likeness to some of those creations of wild German romance—those faces of dead men no longer animated by human spirit, but by an evil demon from the very depths of Tophet.

"You look angry, Henry," said the hungry man, lightly. "You look as though murder were your natural element; you have altogether a bloodthirsty, rabid appearance. Yet I don't suppose you have ever run the risk of taking human life; and I advise you not to begin. Your nerves and digestion are not strong enough to admit of your going so far out in the beaten track with impunity. Unlike myself, who think no more of the life of a man or woman than that of a robin or a sparrow."

"You must know," hissed Mortlake, between gasping sobs, "that there are bounds to every man's endurance. There are even bounds to mine, and you may possibly overstep the limit. You certainly will if you are not cautious; the money you shall have—more than that, I will make you an allowance, say five hundred a year, on condition that you live out of England, and live respectably."

The man in rags snapped his fingers and executed another light, fantastic leap upon the wet tangled grass.

Scorn and derision and the merriest mockery were expressed by the action.

"You imagine that I will accept such terms?" he asked contemptuously. "I gave you credit for more sense, Mr. Henry Mortlake. You know perfectly well that when I have once made up my mind to a thing, I always carry it through."

"Now I have made up my mind to shine in London society—at your expense."

"Everybody knows how immensely rich you are—five hundred a year is no more to you than fivepence would be to most respectable fathers of families who keep cook, housemaid, groom, and gardener, live in the suburbs, and dine every day at six o'clock off everything that's in season. No, Mr. Mortlake. Your wealth is a proverb on 'Change, and I am not going to accept a miserable pittance from you. I dare say I shall spend a couple of thousand pounds in the year, and there may be some debts besides; but I have never yet launched myself fully on London life, and now I mean to do it. Besides, I may marry; I may marry an heiress; I may fall in love with this young lady, the miser's niece; and then, if I come into possession of all that money, I should no longer be a burden to you."

"I'll tell you what," said Mortlake, and now he trembled in every limb, while his hands twitched convulsively, "the demon which possesses you will enter into me if I find myself near you, and then, you know, you had better look out for the consequences—they may be bitter and terrible for you."

"And for you, dear Henry," retorted the other, "equally so for you—worse I should say, for you would fall from such a high estate, whereas I have been used to vicissitudes."

"I never committed a crime," hissed Mortlake between his teeth, "but I feel sorely tempted now."

The other one laughed.

"You told me just now," said he "that I was leagued in with Satan. You are not so far out. I

have a charmed life. If you were to try and kill me, you would fail. Your knife might come out at the other side, but it would leave no wound—ha! ha! ha!"

There was something absolutely hideous in the mirth of this strange being, something unnatural in his confidence, something unearthly in his insolence.

Mortlake looked away from him in unspeakable horror.

"Are you going to write me those cheques?" asked the man in rags, coolly.

"I have no cheque-book here," responded Mortlake, speaking now in a low, heart-broken tone; "but you know where to find me in town. For mercy's sake, leave me at peace for the present; and when you present yourself at Bolton House, some dressed as a gentleman, will you?"

"Certainly," responded the other, gaily. "One of your best West-end tailors shall rig me out in the most fashionable manner."

Mr. Mortlake had opened his purse. He took from it a bank-note, and he wrapped in it some sovereigns—this little packet he forthwith handed to the man in rags.

The other received the small packet coolly, opened it, and, while lifting his eyebrows, said:

"A mean fifty, and eight sovereigns. My good Henry, you are not liberal; but cheer up, you'll improve—just a few lessons from me, and you'll be the most liberal man about town. Good-morning."

Then he thrust the money into his ragged waistcoat pocket and went off in his rags lightly and gracefully through the thicket, at the same time making the echoes resound with the clatter of a lively French song.

His French accent was admirable, his voice well cultivated, though neither sweet in tone nor possessing much richness.

Mortlake looked after him, and a heavy scowl contracted his brow.

"Bergat!" he hissed out. "It would be doing mankind a service to be rid of such a monster. I must lose no time. I must get to town—"

And desperate as was the love of Henry Mortlake for Ethel Thorscliffe, he refused all the invitations of his young friend Roger to pass another day at Greywold.

Mid-day found him in the train rushing towards London, and a drizzling afternoon found him in London itself.

In lieu of going to his mansion at Kensington, Mr. Mortlake journeyed to a certain hotel in the neighbourhood of Oxford Street, and there he inquired if a gentleman called Crainton was in the house.

He was told "Yes," such a gentleman had arrived, had taken number thirty-four, where his luggage then was, and was at present dining in a private room.

Mr. Mortlake took number thirty-five, next to thirty-four, and he, too, ordered dinner in a private room.

At ten he retired to bed; at twelve he heard his neighbour go to bed.

Was that the Mr. Crainton he had inquired for some time before?

The waiter said afterwards that the two gentlemen had met, smoked cigars, drank brandy, and separated at about half-past nine.

In the morning hot water and well-blackened boots were left at the door of each gentleman.

Mr. Mortlake performed his toilette and walked calmly out of his chamber.

His face was pale, his lip was compressed, but his step was perfectly steady.

He entered the coffee-room and ordered broiled chicken, toast, and coffee, for his breakfast.

He was well known and respected at that hotel. He began reading the newspaper.

Presently a wild shrieking as of chambermaids filled the house, a waiter rushed in, pale as the napkin on his arm.

"Sir," gasped he, "Mr. Crainton, your friend, murdered—murdered in his bed! Not robbed, his watch nor nothing taken!"

Mr. Mortlake put down the paper and stared at the waiter blankly.

At that moment another step crossed the coffee-room.

The waiter uttered an exclamation of horror and amazement, and Henry Mortlake saw, standing fashionably dressed before him, the man who had worn rags the day before in the shrubbery at Greywold.

The effect upon him was tremendous. He recoiled, and if the waiter had not caught him in his arms he would have fallen to the ground.

CHAPTER V.

Oh, conspiracy!
 When wilt thou show thy dangerous brow by night,
 When evils are most free? Oh, then by day,
 Whence wilt thou find a cavern dark enough
 To mask thy monstrous visage? Seek none,
 Hide it in smiles and amabilities. SHAKESPEARE.

"Has anything happened?" demanded the new-comer, in a tone of mocking insolence.
 He addressed himself particularly to Mr. Mortlake.
 Then Mortlake found his voice.
 "They told me," he gasped out, "they said that there had been—that you—that you—"
 "Are you?" demanded the new-comer. Then he cast a look of inquiry upon the waiter. "Has anything especially happened?" he demanded.
 The waiter, however, was gasping in like terror and amazement to that which overwhelmed Mortlake.

"What a strange set of people you appear," said the new-comer. "I shall begin to think the world has gone mad. Can I have some breakfast?"
 He threw himself negligently into a low, luxurious seat in the coffee-room as he spoke, crossed one leg over the other, leaned back his head, and absolutely yawned.

It seemed indeed to the waiter as though something was wrong, or somebody had gone mad. He continued to stare at the new-comer as if he were some Hydra-headed monster.

At last he cried out:
 "We thought you were murdered, sir; there was a gentleman in the room where you slept lying half out of bed with a wound in his heart, inflicted by a sharply-pointed dagger—at least, we supposed—
 and we thought it was you."

"In which case I must be my own ghost," said the new-comer, calmly touching his chest, "come down to wake you, and to tell you who is the murderer!"

He glanced at Mr. Mortlake, who had regained nothing of his tranquillity and positively appeared to tremble in every limb.

At this moment the landlady of the hotel, a stout woman in black silk and a smart cap, came into the room.

She was very pale, and seemed fearfully agitated.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," she said, "a dreadful thing has happened! It will ruin the 'Royal Edward' hotel. Will some of you help me to find the murderer? It hasn't been done for the purpose of robbery, I assure you, gentlemen. There is a pocket-book with a Bank of England note in it for a hundred pounds, and ten sovereigns. There is a splendid gold English watch and a heavy gold chain; there's a ring on the pin-cushion set with a diamond as large as a fourpenny piece. So he can't have been murdered for his property, gentlemen, can he?"

Mr. Mortlake by this time had regained something of his composure.

He stood up now, facing the landlady, and said:
 "The burglar must have been disturbed—it is only a chance that he escaped without taking possession of all that valuable property; but—
 are you really sure that anyone has been murdered? They told me that it was you, Mr. Crainton!"—he fixed his eyes on Crainton as he spoke—"and I was so much agitated. They told me that you slept at number thirty-four!"

"Fortunate for me that I did not," cried Crainton, with a faint smile. "After you retired last night there were several people here in the coffee-room smoking, and suddenly a man came in and told us that the Royal Helena Theatre was in flames. I have always been madly fond of a fire from a boy, and this poor party with the heavy chain coming in and asking for a bed, and there not being one at his disposal, I said as once he should have my room and I would go and look at the fire. The bargain was struck, as Mrs. Ryan knows."

He turned for corroboration towards the landlady.

"Yes, sir," said Mrs. Ryan, "that was so."

"So I went and looked at the fire, and it took me nearly all night," continued Crainton; "and this morning I came back to the 'Royal Edward,' for I know the place of old—this is the best house in London for rumpsteaks. Please to let me have one at once, Mrs. Ryan, tender as a chick, well browned, but juicy—you know how I like them—white roll toasted, and a pot of apricot jam, also a good jug of chocolate boiled with milk. I am perfectly ravenous."

The coolness and selfishness of Crainton were certainly a study in their way. Even Mrs. Ryan, while he praised her house and her steaks, felt something

akin to disgust, though she set about to see that his orders were executed.

Before very long he was seated before a table, partaking of his breakfast with evident relief. Mortlake's breakfast was also spread before him, but the rich stockbroker made a mere pretence of eating.

Meanwhile strangers were crowding into the house; Policemen were tramping upstairs.

The name of the murdered gentleman was mentioned by the waiter to Mr. Crainton, who casually asked him for it. It was a Mr. Farmer who had been murdered—a gentleman who held a high official appointment in Somerset House.

"Well," said Crainton, suddenly moving his chair backwards, and throwing the newspaper which he had been scanning carelessly on the ground, "since you and I, Mortlake, have a great deal to talk about, I propose that we order a cab, and proceed at once to Kensington to your house. Better get all these business matters settled at once, had we not?"

Mr. Mortlake darted a look at him—such a look as he had given him the day before, when they were a hundred miles distant from London, down in the country, standing in the shrubbery at Greywold; it was a dangerous look, and Crainton saw it, and answered it with one of scorn.

"Shall I call the cab?" said he, with a cold smile.

"Do as you like," responded Mr. Mortlake.

In a few minutes afterwards the two men were rolling in a cab towards Kensington.

It was a dreary, foggy October morning when the cab drew up before the iron gates of the elegant mansion known as Bolton House.

"You are well lodged, Mr. Henry," remarked Crainton, with his insolent smile, as they stopped out, and a liveried servant admitted them.

A short, broad-shouldered wail let up to the marble steps of the portico. Soon they were in the hall.

Greywold must have appeared a dull and dingy dwelling to one accustomed to so luxuriously fitted-up residences as this Kensington mansion.

The chairs and consoles in the hall were of rose-coloured satin.

The walls were of white marble and gilding, panels were set in these here and there, exquisitely painted with scenes from Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream."

Sarcophagi and vases of precious ancient China stood about upon the consoles and tables of inlaid stone.

A priceless Persian carpet of the brightest dyed was in the centre of the white marble floor. No palace in a dream of "Arabian Nights" splendours could have been more gorgeous, more beautiful, more costly, than this mansion of the stock-broker.

"We will go to my room, if you please," said Mr. Mortlake to his companion.

They mounted a staircase all marble and gilding and velvet-pile carpeting; then came a corridor as palace-like as the hall; afterwards they entered a large, luxurious room, which the stock-broker called his study. This room was furnished in purple velvet, and ornamented with vases, mirrors, pictures—everything glittering and gorgeous. A large fire burned brightly in the polished grate. A large walnut table drawn up to the fire was strewn with business papers.

Mr. Mortlake sat down wearily in an elbow-chair. Crainton threw himself luxuriously upon a couch; he rested his feet upon the fender that he might enjoy the warmth of the blaze.

"I am cold," he said, insolently. "Yesterday, at this time, I had on neither shoes nor stockings. A pair of trousers and an old coat were all my clothing. But you did not hear me complain of cold in that old shrubbery, did you? To-day I am as well clad as yourself, have had a good breakfast, and have driven here in a cab; yet I am beginning to be fastidious and chilly and luxurious in my habits. It's very comical, isn't it?"

"I wish," said Mortlake, "you would talk of something else: not ever and always of your detestable and detested self."

"Complimentary!" said the other, dryly.

"No," returned Mortlake, "if I compliment you, it will be with eulogies."

"If they come to me accompanied by bank-notes they are welcome," was the reply, with a short laugh. "Curse away as much as you like if it amuses you, only don't let that form of amusement monopolise your time and thoughts because I want the business settled. See, three thousand a-year I think was the sum I mentioned? I wish you to settle that on me, and to be as quick about it as possible, and then I wish you to introduce me to all your set, especially those people down in the country, I mean Miss Martin's great-niece and great-nephew."

That is what you will have to do for me, if you please."

"I do not please," roared Mortlake. "I will not do it; I would rather die."

"Well," returned the other coolly, "choose that alternative if you like. I do not see how you are to escape, for you have put your neck within the noose of the law already, even since this time yesterday; in fact."

Mortlake glared upon the other.

Cheeks, lips, and temples were all blanched to an ashen hue; and yet, strange to say, something like self-command came to this man who has hitherto appeared so weak and cowed in the presence of his terror-stricken Crainton.

"You insinuate," he said, "that I last night stabbed to the heart Mr. Richard Farmer, the Inland Revenue Inspector of Somerset House, that he occupied your chamber, that I mistook him for you in the dark, and that my hands are stained with his blood. That is what you insinuate, and you insinuate a falsehood."

The other clasped his hands behind his head, and, leaning back, laughed a satanic laugh.

"I have proof," he said, "that will astonish you, but I am not going to bring it forward now, only you must see yourself what I myself can see, that you have very strong reasons to wish to get rid of me—very strong reasons indeed. I shall take three thousand a year out of your pocket; I shall mix with your grandest friends; I shall, perhaps, make love to the girl whom you admire; I may even take it into my head to marry her."

The insolence with which Crainton enunciated the last sentence it is difficult to convey. Mortlake gasped his teeth and clenched his hands. Crainton continued with a mocking smile:

"You followed me up to London at once. You followed me to the hotel which you know I frequented three years ago, and you asked for me by my name. When I arrived you presented yourself to me. You pretended to be friendly; you supped with me, agreed to postpone the discussion of business until to-day. You retired to rest in a room adjoining mine. At a certain hour you thought I came to bed, and then what happened you know best yourself."

"When you unpack the little travelling valise with which you have journeyed down to Greywold Manor and back again to the Royal Edward Hotel, the little valise which your servant has now doubtless taken to your chamber, you will discover something which you have lost—something which I have found, and which will condemn you in any court of justice as the murderer of Mr. Farmer."

"All your staterooms and satin couches, your mirrors, sofas, and vases, your gold and silver plate, and your diamonds will not protect you then. None of the elegancies of this most recherché mansion will build you up a wall of safety—no, not even your name on 'Change.'"

"You may be very rich, but if your feet have debbled in human blood the English law will clutch you in remorseless talons, and you will swing, my poor Henry—you will swing from a great height in a prison yard. You will be attended by a chaplain and two warders, and by Mr. Alderman Funchbowl, of the City of London, who will see the ceremony well over before he goes to his breakfast with the governor."

"Your last words will, doubtless, be fraught with a spirit of pious resignation, and your dying confession and speech will be sold about the City for one penny."

"Is there no chance," demanded Mortlake, who was trembling with rage and excitement, "that you will come to a like fate yourself?"

"Not the ghost of one," returned the other, insolently. "I am too cool and manage too well; besides have I not told you before that I am assisted by the dark powers? I would kill twenty such men as you—old Inland Revenue fellow, and I would never change colour, wince, tremble, or falter. My nerves, digestion, and circulation are all of the very best. These things are only a matter of nerve and digestion. No, there is not the slightest danger of my ever coming to the fate which I have prophesied for you. But for you there is danger; not, however, my good Henry, if you would consent to be ruled by me. Let us be friends; how much better. I tell you I hold the proof of your guilt in regard to this old gentleman's death, and more than that, you know the other secret, the ghost of which I do not wish even to raise."

The deeply-set eyes of Crainton gleamed with a diabolical leer; his thin lips smiled a satanic smile.

"You are a fiend incarnate!" cried Mortlake, rising to his feet. "You are Satan himself."

(To be Continued.)

SCIENCE.

A NEW STEERING APPARATUS.—This is exhibited in the Russian section in Machinery Hall, and is the invention of M. Nozikoff. The helm being located directly above the propeller shaft, motion is communicated from the latter by a bevel gear to a vertical shaft, which rises immediately abast the wheel. By turning the latter in one or the other direction, one of two clutches is thrown into action, the effect of which is to communicate the motion of the vertical shaft to an ordinary hand wheel which moves the rudder in the usual way. The essential feature of the device is the mechanism whereby the power of the main engines is utilised to manoeuvre the helm, thus obviating the use of the additional small engine commonly employed in steam steering gear for a like purpose.

FLEXIBLE SHAFTING.—Imagine a workman handling the nozzle of a short section of hose. In place of the nozzle, substitute an auger; and then conceive the astonishing appearance of the man directing the auger toward a block above his head, then to the floor, then sidewise in every direction, twisting the hose meanwhile into all sorts of kinks and curls, while the tool, wherever it touches, sinks into the solid material as if the latter were putty. Yet the hose does not rotate. Certainly the invention is a remarkably ingenious one, and it is as simple as it is effective. A long section of wire is made into a close spiral. Over this is wound more wire, the turns being, however, in reverse direction; then follows a third spiral envelope, and so on until suitable thickness is attained. The extremities of the flexible shaft thus formed are brazed. One end is feathered into a driving pulley; the other has a clutch for the tool. A piece of hose or other suitable covering envelopes the shaft, which transmits rotary motion to any desired distance from the source of power and through any number of curves, so that the power may be taken to the work instead of the work to the power. We were told that the device has been successfully applied to marble, granite, and other stone surfacing, polishing, and working; iron drilling and surfacing; wood boring, carving, and facing; horse cleaning and clipping; casting, cleaning, and emery grinding of all kinds. It has been tested, we learn, up to the transmission of nine horse power.

AMERICAN NICKEL MINES.—The nickel deposit near the Gap, Lancaster county, Pa., is considered the largest yet discovered in the world, and the only deposit of the ore worked in America. The mine is on the high dividing line between Chester and Pequea Valleys. Besides nickel, copper, iron, and limestone are found in the same locality. Nickel was discovered here about the year 1856, though copper, which is taken from the same mine, was known in the same locality seventy years ago. The ore has a grey colour, is very heavy, and so hard that it is mined entirely by blasting. After the ore has been broken into small fragments, it is put into kilns holding eighty or ninety tons each, and subjected to heat produced at first by the burning of a small quantity of wood, and continued by the conversion of the expelled gas. It is then put into a smelting furnace, and undergoes a treatment similar to that of iron ore.

DEATH OF MR. THOMAS FEARN.—Mr. Fearn may be said to have been the inventor of the process known as electro-metallurgy, the patent for which he disposed of to the Messrs. Elkington, and which he was instrumental in introducing to every part of the Continent. He studied at the Queen's College, Birmingham, afterwards at Paris, and for some time was a distinguished pupil of the well-known German chemist, Dr. Liebig, with whom he formed a lasting friendship. He was well known to the leading electro-metallurgists of Paris, Vienna, Berlin, and Cologne, and in Birmingham his society was courted, not only for his bright and far-reaching intelligence, but for his kindly and unostentatious geniality.

ELECTRICAL DUST FIGURES IN SPACE.—A brass rod pointed at one end, and with a ball at the other, is laid horizontally on an ebonite plate supported on wood; receives sparks from an electric machine; is discharged by touching, and removed; and the plate is then sprinkled with a fine powder.

HOW TO LAY SHINGLES.—Not one half of the persons who lay shingles when making a roof on a building have any correct ideas in regard to making a roof that will be absolutely rain-tight during a driving storm of rain. We have frequently seen men shingling, who, when they would meet with a worthless shingle, say once in laying two or three courses, would lay this poor shingle among the good ones, saying: "It is only one poor shingle, one shingle cannot make a poor roof." But one poor shingle

will make a leaky one. If first rate shingles are employed, and one poor one is worked in among every 100, that roof might about as well have been without any shingles. If any poor shingles are to be used, let them all be laid together near the upper part of the roof. The best of shingles will not make a tight roof if they are not properly laid, while the same shingles would make an excellent roof if laid as shingles should be laid.

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

THE DRAMA.

OPERA COMIQUE.

THIS pretty theatre has been rescued for awhile from Opera Bouffe and "leg pieces," and diverted to English comedy, farce, and play, by Mr. John Hollingshead. The opening piece de resistance is well-described as "a new and original farcical play" in three acts, by Mr. Alfred Maltby, which has already achieved immense success at Liverpool and elsewhere. Judging by the explosions of laughter which greet the various situations contrived by the author and embodied by Mr. Collette, the "farcical play" of "Bounce" will draw full houses for many a night of the long winter before us. The fun is certainly of the broadest character. A young lady, Minnie Spence, has been left to the cares of five guardians; her papa considering that each of the five scoundrels will prevent either of the others from getting hold of his daughter and her large fortune for himself. One of them, however, Wylie Coyle, a lawyer (Mr. Edgar), seems likely to succeed were it not for the irrepressible vivacity, versatile talent, and irresistible energy of Tom Bounce (Mr. Collette), whom Minnie's good will, and the young lady has a will of her own, at once selects as her champion and lover. Coyle thinks he has secured his hold on Minnie and her money for his son, Mervyn Coyle, by the possession of a secret concerning her deceased father, but Tom Bounce gets hold of the documents and discovers others ruinous to the character of Wylie Coyle himself. To the other guardians Tom Bounce introduces himself in most amusing disguises and assumptions. To Mr. Forbarrs Reste, an amateur musician, Tom comes as two different composers, one of the high classical, the other, the frivolous and popular school. To Professor Phluff, a man of science, he appears as Professor Bosche, an enthusiastic entomologist and butterfly-collector; to Lord Herringbome, an admirer of the natural and unconventional, he becomes Michael Patrick O'Doherty, an Irish patriot of a hybrid Fenian Home Ruler proclivities, with speeches, patter-songs and dances of wonderful glibness, tact, character, fluency, and activity. Tickling the idiosyncrasies of each, Mr. Collette extorts a promise of favour for his suit to Minnie, and when the moment for disclosure arrives, and the assembled worthies discover, on throwing off his last disguise, how thoroughly Tom Bounce (favoured by the young lady) has befooled them all, the fun is completed, poetical justice rendered, the lovers made happy, and the "farcical play" over. It may be gathered from this rough sketch that "Bounce" is merely a piece de circonstance for the development of the peculiar talents of a particular actor. But it is something more. It is a good, laugh-provoking, funny play from end to end; as the old oster, Gaitus; as a French musician, as an Irish orator; as a cootermonger, and a German musician, he was most mirth-moving in look, accent, action, and make-up. Mr. R. Soutar was capital as a muddled and meddling waiter, and Mr. F. Charles, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Valentine, and Mr. Belle, acted up to the conception of the four guardians of the wilful Minnie. Mr. Edgar playing the villain of the piece, Wylie Coyle, with effect and impressiveness, Miss Louise Henderson's Minnie, and Miss Lee's Tabitha Kurlis, her friend, deserve a line of praise. Those who seek a hearty laugh and two hours' genuine amusement should visit the Opera Comique and they will find that "Bounce" will not disappoint them. "A Cup of Tea" is the lever de rideau; and the short piece of patter with the long name of "Crytoconehoidosyphonostomatas" again introduces Mr. Collette, with Miss Phillips as Polly Toddlepoh. We are glad of the winter conversion of this pretty theatre into an English house.

COURT THEATRE.

THE public—that is that portion of the playing public—who do not hunger after the fashionable

folly in frivolous music, bewildering spectacle, under dressed women, over-dressed men, break-downs and walk-rounds, may thank Mr. Hare for providing comedy, at least that class usually called high comedy, with a home. Mr. Coghlan's three-act comedy entitled "Brothers," is the latest production at the Court, and if it does not fulfil all the purposes of its author in the production of a standard play, goes far in the right direction. Mr. Charles Coghlan—now in America—late of the Princess's, is well known, and we have to congratulate him on the success of his drama, in a house and before an audience both discriminating and impartial. The story is that of two brothers, Sir Francis Meredith (Mr. Hare) a wealthy Welsh baronet, who has a dependant younger brother, Fred Meredith, who has adopted the name of Fred Seymour, and the profession of an artist, occupying a studio in Charlotte Street. Fred is hard up, and a bit of a Bohemian, his proud brother, Sir Francis, paying his debts at intervals, when Fred can go on no longer upon credit. Kate Hungerford, daughter of a choleric Captain Hungerford, who has been in some way "about to marry" Sir Francis Meredith for ever so long, casually makes the acquaintance of Fred the artist, and in idle coquetry, as it would seem, goes frequently to his studio to have her portrait painted, unknown to papa and unknowing that Fred Seymour is really Fred Meredith, and brother to Sir Francis of Corwen Castle, North Wales. This will give the reader the key to the situation, the details by which the denouement is arrived at would take too much space to narrate. Kate fancies she loves the artist, and he supposes he is in love with her. There is a Captain Davenport, too, a faithful suitor of Kate's, a friend of the Merediths, who finds out Kate's visits to Charlotte Street, in a curious manner. He calls on Fred, drops his glove, and missing it, returns some time afterwards, when lo! the portrait is uncovered, and the astounded and shocked Davenport finds the painter's innamorata is his own brother Francis's fiancée, Kate Hungerford. There is a Bohemian jollification at Fred's studio at the end of the first act, where the scene closes on a furious quarrel between the French waiter from the neighbouring restaurant and a German art-student named Hermann, cleverly played by Mr. Denison. Kate is down at Corwen Castle, and is certainly undecided. Kate Hungerford and her father try to ignore all about Fred, and the Charlotte Street adventure. But the secret comes out, and Fred becomes a sort of genteel bully. In fact, Kate, not altogether insensible to the charms of a title and ten thousand a year, begins to doubt if she really has found her heart's idol in the studio of the so called Fred Seymour, to whom Sir Francis with assumed stoicism resigns his claim. While she is balancing, comes a rumour of the ruin of Sir Francis's fortune, and Fred hesitates to accept Kate's hand. Sir Francis's outward iciness is broken, and his affection for Kate bursts all restraint. She in return gives him to understand that she will be his wife, misfortune notwithstanding. Old Captain Hungerford don't like this, but the rumour proves false and all comes right, Corwen Castle being made "Arcadia" by its new master and mistress, while "Bohemia" is still represented by Frederick Meredith. We shall return to Mr. Coghlan's plays and its actors in our next.

MADAME TUSSEAU'S latest addition, say the advertisements, is a group of the three Emperors—Russia, Germany, and Austria. Her last was Sultan Aziz, or, "As isn't," as a Cockney friend observed. Could not the latter be put in a (political) cauldron, and "the three" be gronped around it as the three "weird sisters" in Macbeth? The situation would be suggestive and dramatic (?)

THE Prince of Wales, in the course of last week, accompanied by Prince Louis of Hesse and Prince John of Glücksburg, patronised the drama rather extensively. On Monday evening, the royal party visited the Strand; on Tuesday, the Globe; on Wednesday, the Vaudeville; on Thursday, the Criterion, H. R. H. starting for Sandringham on Friday.

MR. W. B. FAIR, of "Tommy make room for your uncle" celebrity, is engaged as stage manager at the Victoria Theatre, under Mr. Aubrey the new lessee.

THERE is a five act comedy of modern life by the late Lord Lytton, in rehearsal at the Court Theatre, of which report speaks well. We have noticed Mr. Coghlan's play of "Brothers" in our present number.

THE Shaughraun is to be produced at the Adelphi. It is said that Mr. Chatterton offered Mr. Hubert O'Grady an engagement for "Conn," but that gentleman was already "bespoke," and unable to accept it.



[THE MISERABLE POOR.]

RICHARD PEMBERTON;

—OR—

THE SELF-MADE JUDGE.

CHAPTER I.

It is a fearful night; a feeble glare
Streams from the sick moon, in the overclouded
sky.

BRYANT.

It was the rough coast of V—. It was evening, and the clouds sat upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of the storm moved on the waters.

Eastward the darkened sea spread till it met the lowering sky.

Westward the old primeval forest stretched till it reached the horizon.

Between the sea and the forest lay a desert of level sand.

It was not dark, for the moon was at its full, and though obscured by clouds, it shed a sombre light over the scene.

A sullen, drizzling rain was falling, and through this rain, over the dreary coast road, passed a wretched little wagon, drawn by a donkey, and filled with three dreary-hearted travellers.

The first was a woman, of tall and powerful frame, whose fine proportions could not be concealed even by the voluminous brown cloak that wrapped her form.

The hood of the cloak, which served also as a bonnet, had fallen back, revealing a well-set, resolute head, covered with coarse black and grey hairs and a face with large, strong, clear-cut features, and a stern, determined expression.

She sat forward in the wagon, driving the donkey. But as her hands mechanically guided the reins, her eyes were fixed with a fierce, devouring gaze upon the distance before her.

The second, her companion, was a young woman of slight and graceful form—or rather, it seemed so, as she sat closely shrouded in a black shawl, with her white face pressed upon her whiter hands—bowed, collapsed, shuddering and silent, except when trying to soothe the weeping babe upon her lap, or venturing some anxious whispered question to the stern driver, as:

"Mother, mother, are we almost there? Can you see the lights of the city?"

And the dark woman's only answer was her

silence, which seemed to be understood by her daughter.

Many weary hours had the miserable little party plodded on their way through the rain and mist. And now they neared their journey's end. And well might the mother send her burning glance with passionate desire into the far distance.

And well might the daughter question with eager, breathless anxiety.

Their errand was upon the issue of which hung life or death.

The only son of the elder woman, the husband of the younger, the father of the infant, lay chained and fettered in a condemned cell, doomed to die a death upon the scaffold.

A crime that had filled the whole community with horror had been traced to his door, and so strong were the circumstances produced in evidence against him on his trial, that the whole tenor of his previous life had been unavailing to effect a verdict in his favour.

He was found guilty and condemned to death. The youth, beauty, genius, and misfortunes of the prisoner had produced their natural effect upon the public mind, and had strongly interested popular sentiment in his favour.

Such things ought not to be, perhaps, but such things are.

Where a poor, illiterate, misguided, friendless man would have been executed, without a hand or a voice being lifted to save him, this handsome, talented, and accomplished youth, found hosts of friends, ready to accept and credit his protestations of innocence, and to get up and sign eloquent petitions to the government in his behalf.

That the previous history of his life had been comparatively good, that he was concerned upon circumstantial evidence alone, that he was the only and beloved son of a widowed mother, whose heart would be broken, and whose grey hairs would be brought in dishonour to the grave by his fall, that he was the husband of a youthful wife and the father of an innocent child, whose lives would be ruined and disgraced by his unmerited execution—these were the causes set forth with more or less good reason why the sentence of the law should not be executed upon the prisoner, but the judge of that day was a hard-headed, some said hard-hearted, man, who boasted that he made it a rule, without an exception, never to interfere to arrest the course of the law.

And so the friends of the prisoner had given up in despair, and left the boy to his fate.

Only one still hoped—his young wife. And this was the ground of her hope.

The judge, a young man whose name and fame made the poor wife's heart thrill with new life and expectation, for he was one who had known want, sorrow, toil, and struggle, and who had conquered them and his own destiny, and who was now borne victorious upon the very topmost crest of popularity.

It was natural to suppose that his bosom was filled with all gracious affections, benevolent emotions, and generous impulses.

Was it not most reasonable to suppose that his very first official act would be an act of mercy? Youth was always generous and merciful.

Was it not likely that he would rejoice at the opportunity of signalling his coming into power by the salvation of a fellow creature's life—a life the public were so eager to have saved—whose pardon would therefore bring him so much popularity? And, oh, besides! oh, more than all, he was himself a young husband and father, with a beautiful wife, and a beloved only babe—would not the pity of his heart grow strong for the wife and child of the poor condemned?

Oh, altogether, when she came to think of it, it was unlikely, it was impossible he should refuse to hear her prayers!

And so she had urged the prisoner's mother to this journey, and now, as she rode on through the driving rain and mist, her hope grew so strong by cultivation, that she raised her cowering form, and would not endure to see her mother sitting there in front of the wagon, driving so mechanically, with her burning gaze fixed with such fierce, hungry desire upon the forward vision of the unseen city. She said:

"Dear mother, cheer up; cheer up, mother. Oh, I know that all will be well! The judge cannot fail to hear us and to grant us his life! Oh, yes, all will be well!"

"And yet, Nelly, you shudder and sigh as you say it."

"Yes, mother, because— Oh, Heavens! the faintest doubt upon this subject is so horrible!"

The poor girl groaned.

"So, mother, see; the lights of the city! Are not those the lights of the city?"

"Yes, we are drawing near M—, Nelly; still that wild, eager heart of yours, woman. What is the use of wishing, longing, hoping, fearing about anything in life? 'Tis but three score years and ten at the longest! And 'tis soon over, and all

swamped in death, and prince and pauper, king and convict, are equal in the grave!"

Nelly pressed the infant on her knees closer to her bosom, as she bent forward and looked into the mother's face.

It was white and sturn and set, but the eyes burned with a wild fire.

"Heaven preserve her senses!" said the poor girl to herself, as she sank back into her seat.

They were drawing near the city now. Here and there a solitary dwelling house or road-side tavern cheered the lonely, barren desolation of the scene. They drove on with all speed the poor old worn-out donkey could be urged to make, and soon the boundaries of the city were passed, and the miserable little wagon drew up before a poor but decent tavern.

The older woman alighted, and assisted the younger to descend with her child.

And then she gave the old donkey-cart to the care of a boy, and led the way into a poor parlour.

Her first question to the landlord was: "Has the judge reached the city?"

"Not yet," but he is expected this evening, and the young men of the town have turned out, a hundred horsemen strong, to meet and escort him to the city. They have mustered and will march down this road. If you sit at the window, you'll see them pass. And as for the inauguration of to-morrow, the city is full of soldiers, military companies from all parts, and it is said it will be the greatest military parade that has been seen. Listen to the boys now! They make a babel of every street," said the host, going to a window and throwing it open. "And—"

"Yes," answered the older woman.

"You have come to town to attend the markets, mayhap? There will be great markets for a day or two; prices will be very high while the city is so full of people."

"We have not come to market."

"Oh, only to see the parade and get a sight of the new judge?"

"Yes."

"Send some woman to show us where we are to sleep," said the older woman.

Nelly had sat down in a darkened corner with her child on her knee and her head bowed over it, but she heard and shuddered at the words of the unconscious landlady.

He went out, and his exit was soon followed by the entrance of a slatternly maid of all work, who conducted the two women upstairs into a little, low, ill-furnished bed-room, and left them.

"Oh, mother, how can we sit here waiting in idleness, and know that he is imprisoned and chained, alone, unfriended, suffering! Oh, mother, he cannot come to us; he is helpless in his bonds; let us go to him! We cannot see the judge till to-morrow, mother! Oh, let us go to him!"

"Impossible, Nelly; the prison doors have been closed for hours. I charge you be patient. To-morrow, at the earliest hour of admittance, we will be at the prison gates. And afterwards to haunt the steps of the judge all day and night, till he hears us."

"Oh, but to have got here in time to-night! And how to live till to-morrow!" exclaimed the poor girl, shuddering.

CHAPTER II.

And as we gazed on Chesapeake heaving tide,
I never saw so beautiful a night—
BARRET.

FROM within us comes often all the gloom of beauty of the scene around us.

On that same night, at that same hour, and by that road, passed another vehicle, with another party, on their way to the city.

It was a very handsome, spacious travelling carriage, drawn by a pair of superb horses.

The carriage contained four persons. On the back seat reclined a handsome man in the early prime of life, and a beautiful woman in her first bloom.

Opposite to them sat the nurse, and on her lap reposed a lovely child, six months old.

The babe was well wrapped in a soft, white silk cloak and hood, and a linen cambric handkerchief of cob-web texture was thrown partially over its face to shield it from the night air, without obstructing its breathing.

The blinds of the carriage were let down for awhile to admit the fresh air from the salt water, and the fine prospect of the grand, lonely sea, stretched out to infinity under the grand, lonely sky, and the great, black, pine-forest, like an army of giants halting, on the west.

For this party was happy and at ease, and so they thought the deep-toned glory of the sober grey

heaven and earth exceedingly beautiful, and fancied that the light fall of the rain made low music on the waters.

It was the mother who at length put down the windows with an apologetic smile.

She, too, inquired, but it was with a beaming eye and joyous tone:

"Are we near the city? Do you see the lights?"

And he answered, in an encouraging, cordial voice:

"No, dear Augusta, not yet. We are full ten miles off, and even on such a grand level as this, could not see so far. But never mind, the road is good, the night fine, and we shall be there in less than two hours."

Well might they be happy.

Well might they be eager for their journey's consummation.

For it was to a triumph—a well-earned, well-merited triumph!

Richard Pemberton, the judge, was the son of a blacksmith; rising for his sword and alight in the battle of life, simply right, reason, and Christian principles, he had fought every inch of his way through the successive stages of reputation, distinction, and eminence, even to his present high official station.

And she who bore his distinguished name, and shared his honours—the lady who sat by his side—was one of England's proudest daughters. Not won in the days of his great success, but—by the grandchild of an ex-patriated nobleman; by the strangest vicissitudes of fortune, she had been thrown upon Richard Pemberton's protection while she was yet an infant and a boy.

Much trouble of every sort had the young patriot given the boy, the youth, and the man.

But he had carried her in his strong arms, above every want and care and sorrow, loving her more tenderly for every burden he bore for her sake, prizing her higher for every fault he conquered in her character.

And now she sat by his side his happy wife.

The marriage on his side at least was not one of passion.

Richard Pemberton had but one grand passion—ambition!

And even that was dedicated, consecrated to high and holy purposes.

But from childhood he had loved, served, and protected her.

And now he cherished her with the old tender, unchanged affection.

He her guardian and teacher, as well as her lover, had had some difficulty in winning her heart and hand, but when at last she gave them, they were yielded up entirely, without reservation, with passionate abandonment.

He was a man for a woman's worship—it was his right, and he received it.

The travellers pursued the same road for more than an hour longer, until coming to a point where it forked, Mr. Pemberton pulled the check-string, stopped the carriage, let down the blind, put his head out of the window, and called to the coachman:

"Take the road to the left, Thomas."

"But why do you prefer the longest and worst road?" inquired the young wife, curiously.

"Because, dear Augusta, I have been confidentially advised that there are a hundred unbidden civilians coming down the road we have just left to meet the carriage, and escort it in triumph to the city, to say nothing of the thousand men, women and children, collected a little farther on to see the entree! Now, I think, Augusta, that the parade of to-morrow will be quite sufficient, without this preliminary fuss; and I consider also that my dear wife and child are tired and hungry, and need rest and refreshment. And finally, I remember that there is a quiet old couple, in a quiet house in W—, who will be more sincerely happy to see us to-night, than all the gaping, staring, hallooing multitude assembled to do themselves honour. And so, Augusta, we will enter the city quietly by another road than the crowd expects, and go to our parents' house, and gladden their aged hearts by the sight of the babe they have never yet seen, and prepare ourselves by a calm domestic evening, and a long night's rest, for the harassing display of to-morrow!"

"But will not the disappointment of your friends make you very unpopular?"

"Not just at this time. It is now the good pleasure of the people to praise their favourite. They will attribute the best motive to his actions. In this instance they will ascribe a much better one than that which really actuates him. They will say he eludes parade upon public principles, and shuns for him louder than ever."

"Still I am sorry that their confident hope will

be disappointed, and that they will lose the pleasure of doing you this honour."

"Honour! Why, dear Augusta, you do not understand! Why, if to-morrow instead of being inaugurated I were to be executed, there would be just as great a crowd collected from the very same motive—love of excitement."

This seemed to be an unhappy speech, for when Richard Pemberton had spoken it, both were suddenly silent from a similar cause.

At last:

"There is a poor wretch in the condemned cell to be executed the day after to-morrow, is there not?" asked Augusta, in a subdued tone.

"Yes; I was just thinking of him," replied the judge, in a grave voice.

"And after twelve o'clock to-morrow you will have the power of signing his reprieve, and so by the stroke of your pen, saving a fellow creature from the scaffold. What a privilege!"

"And what a responsibility!"

"I do not know the poor man, of course, I only know that he lies fettered in the condemned cell, waiting to die a shameful death, and from my soul I pity him and his friends, whose misery this night stands in such hideous contrast to our happiness. And my very soul thrilled with joy to-day, when I read in the morning's paper that 'It is confidently reported that Judge Pemberton will meet the public wishes, by reprieving O'Donovan, as soon as he gets into office.' It is a Heaven-like privilege, that of showing mercy! You will consecrate your office by making your very first official act an act of grace!" said Augusta, fervently.

In the enthusiasm of her benevolence and sympathy, she caught his hand, and pressed it to her bosom, and bent forward to catch a responsive glow from his face.

There was none there.

His countenance was dark and very grave, his silence ominous.

She trembled, and scarcely lifted her voice above her breath, when she inquired:

"Will you not pardon O'Donovan?"

"No, Augusta, I will not."

"Alas! I was so sure you would."

"You presumed, in your ignorance."

"And so, Mr. Pemberton, do the public! The pardon of this poor prisoner is confidently expected of you."

"Then public expectation must be disappointed."

"It will make you unpopular."

"A second time to-day, dear Augusta, you have urged popularity upon me as an object. Never do so a third time—never while you live. When did you ever know the desire of popular favour to influence my action? Who would wisely and righteously rule, must not be governed by the caprices of the ruled—it were a paradox."

"Then the miserable man must die?"

"I have said it."

"Heaven be merciful to him!"

"Amen!"

CHAPTER III.

Here's the vast city with its peopled homes,
And hearts all full of an immortal life;
Thousands and tens of thousands beating there,
Strangers from different lands of every hue,
And tribe, and nation congregating near,
Scemen the sport of many a distant wave,
And busy merchants hurrying to and fro,
And curious travellers with thoughtful mien,
Grave men of place and inexperienced youth,
And the doomed prisoner in his darkened cell.

The judge elect with his family entered M— through one of the quietest suburbs, and turned into one of the broadest, finest, and most retired streets.

The carriage drew up before a handsome, dark stone house, set on a hill, back from the streets, surrounded with trees, and having its grounds terraced down to the level of the side pavement.

Two lamps on posts before the gates flanked the front of the house, and the successive baronets.

The groans dismounted and opened the carriage door, put down the steps, and while his master was alighting to assist his party out, he went up the steps, and rang the door bell.

In a moment the door was thrown wide open, revealing a lighted passage within, and a number of ladies on the watch, who, when they saw and recognized the travellers, flew out like a flock of birds, and met them half-way, with the most joyous welcome, and folding lady Augusta in their arms with cordial affection, and taking possession of the baby, and passing it from one to the other, with exclamations of love, wonder, and delight—though it was perfectly true that there never was a baby seen on earth precisely like that baby, and therefore it is

no wonder that all its aunts, uncles, cousins, parents, and grandparents, dotted on it to fatuity. "And how is father and mother, girls?" asked Richard Pemberton.

"Pa is confined to his easy chair with a slight touch of the gout, though we have wheeled him into the parlour for tonight, to see you. And ma is well—there she is now," said one of the young girls, as an old lady, dressed in black satin, appeared at the door.

She was walking slowly and cautiously down to meet her son and daughter.

Richard Pemberton hastened to greet her, and drew her arm within his own, and supported her from the others came up, and Augusta had paid her affectionate respects, and had been pressed to the old lady's bosom, and the baby had been held up by the admiring aunts to the view of the admiring grandmother.

No! the world was several thousand years old then, but it had never produced a "human" baby like that before!

Grandma elevated both her hands in speechless ecstasy.

And all the aunts, uncles, and cousins held up theirs.

And all this enthusiastic appreciation re-acted upon the mother's love and pride, and made her admire her baby, and believe in its unapproachable perfection ten times more than she did before, if that could be possible.

The travellers were then conducted into the house and into a spacious, well-lighted, richly-furnished family parlour, ornamented with elegant books, paintings, medallions, statuettes, and mirrors, that multiplied everything else, and exotics that filled the air with perfume.

In a corner, by the glowing grate sat an old man in the easy chair, propped up, and reposing, half-buried in and among downy, silken cushions. This was old David Pemberton, the retired blacksmith, and father of the judge-elect.

He was a grand-looking old man of gigantic proportions, and fine-boned features, like his son's, crowned by a head of hair like snow-dusted.

He was smoking a clay pipe, but laid it aside when he saw the party enter, and made several attempts to rise and meet them, but failed, and at last sank back in his chair.

Richard Pemberton hastened to him, and greeted him with the warmest respect and affection, to which the old man replied:

"The Lord bless thee, Richard! The Lord for ever bless thee! So they have made thee judge at last, lad. Well, well, well, who lives long must see much; but I never expected to see this day! Heaven be praised that has brought thee to honour, and spared me to see it, boy! Judge! Well, well! I didn't expect this thirty years ago, when I begged an old packing-box from John O'Donovan, the tavern-keeper, and put rollers to it for a cradle for you. John was the greatest man in those days! Well, but how times are changed! My son is the new judge, and John's son is—Well, well!"

While the childish old man is babbling in this way the young sisters have crowded round Augusta, proffering their services.

They insist that she shall not have the trouble of going upstairs to change her dress until she retires for the night.

Nor, indeed, is any change necessary. In her luxurious marriage she has contracted no travel dust.

And as of the young sisters. One takes off her bonnet and shawl and takes them upstairs, while another draws forward an easy chair to receive her, and grandma herself relieves the darling baby of its cloak and hood.

"Times are changed!" exclaims the old man. Yes, times were changed, indeed with them, but not more so than with a vast number of our country men and women, whom their own industry and talents, or those of their children, have lifted from the dust, and set in high places.

I heard a very old friend of this family, who had known them from the first, say that it seemed to her strange and delightful to remember what that old lady had been, and to see what she was now—to remember her the barefooted mistress of a rural hotel, who daily carried her husband's dinner to the forge; and who would spend all the afternoon in gathering a basketful of wild fruits or nuts, and walk on stilts to market the next morning to sell them for three shillings to get little Dick a pair of shoes.

And to see her now arrayed in that rich dark satin dress, seated in the velvet easy chair, presiding, with not undignified ease, over her son's town house.

But the old man is still babbling pleasantly while we are digressing, and at last he remembers that

there is someone else in the world besides that matchless son, who stands there by his chair listening to his childish talk as respectfully as if it were the wisdom of Solomon, and he calls out, chirpingly:

"But where is my dear Augusta? Where is Mrs. Richard Pemberton?"

Augusta left her place and went and paid her affectionate respects, saying that she had been waiting to attract his notice for some time, but would not interrupt his agreeable chat with Mr. Pemberton.

"Aye! she is more considerate than she used to be, Dick, that is thy work. You always had the knack of making people stop to think a bit. But where is the wee lassie?"

The babe was brought by its grandmother, and laid upon his knees.

"Aye, a fine child," said the patriarch, taking out his glasses, wiping them slowly, and setting them on his nose, "a very fine child indeed! quite an uncommon fine one! But who is she like? Can you tell me, grandmother?"

The old lady was sure it was the very image of grandfather himself.

At which grandfather, who entirely believed it, was wonderfully pleased.

The girls, who followed and clustered around the baby like flies around a deep of honey, were entirely fastidious upon the point, as they turned their glances from the shrunken visage of the most venerable of patriarchs to the tender, delicate blooming face of the most beautiful of infants.

And then the girls, united upon this point, were divided upon another—namely, having decided who the baby was not like, they fell to disputing who it was. Harriet and Elizabeth were certain it was like its mother; but Lucy and Letitia were positive it resembled its father.

"How can you say that when her eyes are of the deepest blue, like dear Augusta's?" exclaimed Harriet.

"Bine! just hear the girl! when I will leave it to any human being, with eyes in their head, that the child's are black—black as midnight, like brother Richard's," said Letitia; and to prove it she snatched the babe from its grandfather's knees and carried it under the full blaze of a chandelier, where the little one winked its eyes at such a rate that it was impossible to tell their hue.

To decide the matter the cap was pulled off to see if the colour of the hair would throw any light upon the subject.

"There!" exclaimed Harriet, exhibiting a little glistening golden head of hair. "There! I told you she had dark blue eyes, like her mamma; and so she has, for her hair is light, and everybody knows light hair always goes with blue eyes."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Letitia. "Oh, that's too good! Just see how she's caught herself. Light hair always goes with blue eyes; does it; and dear Augusta's eyes are dark blue; and her hair bluish black! Ha! ha! ha!"

"Girls! girls!" cried the old man, in a shrill voice, "girls! I am going to have that child put to bed. It's not a woman's doll, or a puppy dog, to be pulled and dragged in that way! Augusta, have you my mother's beads? She says they're treating the hoarse?"

Augusta, who had been busily washing their rough usage of her darling, now came forward and took the frightened but patient little creature in her arms, saying:

"It is late, dear girls, for little Maud's eyes to be open; let me ring for her nurse, and take her to bed."

No; Augusta must not fatigue herself. They would see the nurse put Maud to bed.

And Elizabeth ran and rang the bell, and Lucy wanted to know whether the baby would want thickened milk, and said she knew how to make it.

And grandma came forward and told them all to "Hush!" for she knew more about children than all the rest put together. Hadn't she "raised" eleven, and so saying she took the babe from Augusta's reluctant but unwilling arms, and carried it out of the room; the girls following as naturally as if they were needles and the child a magnet. Augusta went, too sure in her heart that grandmother was going to give it cordial.

And Richard Pemberton remained standing with his elbow resting upon the mantelpiece, listening to his father's talk.

And meanwhile in a spacious upper chamber there is a pleasant little family scene going on. The babe, who had firmly closed its lips and utterly rejected the cordial, lies sleeping quietly enough without it.

And its little crib, of Grecian fashion, with fine rich lace curtains, looked like some beautiful shrine or reliquary.

And Augusta reclines upon a lounge, for Augusta

must rest before supper, say all the girls, and grandmother endorses it.

And grandmother herself sits in an arm chair near Augusta's lounge, and makes her tell all about the baby from the day of its birth to the present night.

And the girls bring out their offerings to the infant—fruits of many an industrious hour lovingly bestowed upon the little stranger.

Harriet produces a richly embroidered robe, the work of her own fingers.

Elizabeth displays a superb white cashmere cloak worked with silk, and a hood to correspond.

Lucy half a dozen worked muslin caps and Letitia another robe, quite as handsome as the first.

And when all these have been examined, and praised, and gratefully accepted, grandmother sends Lucy to her room to bring "that little Morocco trunk."

And when it comes she takes it on her knee and unlocks it, and produces a dozen pair of socks-knit by herself, of the very finest lambswool yarn, and of assorted colours, white predominating.

"There!" says the old lady, with not unjustifiable pride, "there! maybe they are not so showy as the girls' work, but I think you'll find them quite as useful."

"Yes, indeed, dear good grandmother, they will be very useful," said Augusta, catching the old lady's fat hand and pressing it to her lips.

And the old lady raises her wistful eyes to her daughter-in-law's face, and says:

"Aye, you like me better than you used to, don't you, Augusta?"

"Yes, dear madame; and I hope it is the same with you. You know me better than you once did."

"Aye; I like you better because you are better!"

Now, although Augusta took this equivocal compliment kindly, and as it was meant, yet it was not quite just. It was an innocent mistake of the old lady's. Augusta had always been good—not so near perfection as she was now—but always well disposed.

It was grandmother herself who had been far wrong, and was now—partly by Augusta's patience—brought right.

Not always had this worldly plebeian family so loved and served the young patrician lady, who even in her tender infancy was thrown upon their protection. Once a fierce jealousy and hatred had reigned in their bosoms, and blinded their moral vision, so that nothing Augusta looked, or said, or did, seemed good in their sight.

You shall hear after a bit; I have not time to tell you now, nor is this the place, for the supper bell is ringing, and the old lady is rising and putting the things out of her lap, with a parting rebuke on the subject in this wise:

"Well, girls, in all your doing you have done nothing for Augusta herself—not even worked her collar."

"Oh! haven't we? We did intend to keep it a secret, but—well, I think, if Augusta will open the upper drawer of her bureau she will find something her maid did not put there," exclaimed Elizabeth.

"The sweetest worked nightcap," said Letitia, smiling.

"Hush!" exclaimed Lucy, nudging the speaker, and thus betraying her own personal agency in the matter.

"Well, even if you had forgotten her, I know who had not. Here, my dear," said grandmother, drawing from the bottom of the red Morocco trunk several pair of the finest white lambswool socks. "Here, my love, it took me nearly all the summer to knit these; for you see they are so fine I could only knit them in the daytime; they are like cob-web almost, for I remembered all your dainty little notions, and I knew you would not wear the coarse. And now let us go down to supper. But, why don't you give your sister-in-law your arm? You know she is tired and weak. Traveling, time, expense, and anxiety makes a woman weak, and Augusta has had to undergo both today."

They passed through the parlour in going to supper.

The old man still sat in his easy chair, and his son stood by his side, leaning his elbow upon the mantelpiece, and listening to his talk.

Augusta, as she entered, caught the lag end of the conversation.

The old man was saying:

"I think you ought to, indeed I do. His father was a good friend of mine and a good friend to you, too. I remember when he gave me a box to make a cradle for you, Richard! You can't say that was bribery and corruption, because he couldn't have foreseen you would ever have the power, Dick. You will do it, I hope?"

"No, father!"

"No!" repeated the old man, bringing down his cane emphatically, even authoritatively. "But the people expect it of you, Richard. You owe them something for making you Governor General. You should try to please them, as I used to admonish you long since, when I 'prenticed you to the lawyer. You'll do it like a good lad, Richard?"

"No, sir, I cannot!"

"Cannot! You can. You have the power."

"Then I will not!"

"You will—it must be so! The people will have it so! And you know Vox—Box—Fox—what is it, Dick? The text you know you used to put on your paper!"

"Vox populi, vox—"

"Yes, I know now. Fox popular—box of dominions—the voice of the people is the voice of Heaven! Now, Dick, that used to be your own text. Now, if you believe that, you ought to obey it!"

"Father, we outlive most of our youthful enthusiasms, and learn to modify many of our opinions. For instance, I do not now think that the voice of the people always is, or always has been, the voice of Heaven. Think you that it was so, when it cried 'Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Release unto us Barabbas?'"

"Ah, Dick! Ah, Dick! you are a good orator, and that's what helped to make you Governor General. But oratory don't make it feel a bit pleasanter to have poor O'Donovan hung. Ah, Dick! I'm afraid! I'm afraid! But I always heard prosperity hardened the heart! Lord bless my soul, grandmother, is not supper ready yet? I'm all but starved!" concluded the old man, when he perceived that his wife and daughter had entered.

The old lady announced supper was on the table.

The old gentleman, with the help of his son, arose, and leaning with his left hand, slowly passed into the supper-room.

Here some of the sons of the family joined them, and all gathered around a well-laid table.

Still the old man harped upon the subject of the convict, turning the conversation into that channel, and keeping it there.

All around the table expressed their deep sympathy.

Some of them, we know, had already pleaded the cause of the prisoner.

Now you could not have decided whether they were the most interested in the subject of the pardon or their supper.

And yet they were very sincere in their sympathy.

Such is nature.

Only mark this, that while they who so eloquently expressed their sympathy, and so zealously pleaded for a pardon, ate and drank with a good relish for their food, he who firmly refused to reprieve, scarcely touched a morsel, but sat grave and pale, and judge, if you please, who at heart felt the most painful sympathy.

But Richard Pemberton was a man in a million, and weighed justice and mercy in the scales of conscience.

But to-morrow the most portentous trial awaits him.

He must encounter the pleadings of the convict's broken-hearted mother and grief-stricken wife. He would not sacrifice conscience for family love or popular favour; will he sacrifice it to their awful sorrow?

He would not yield to wife or people, will he yield to them?

In the pauses of the conversation, distant sounds in the town were heard, and "Hurrah for Pemberton!" was shouted.

They left the supper-table, and assembled in the parlour for family prayer.

The patriarch read a portion of the Holy Scripture, and then knelt with all his household, and led their devotions.

When this was over the family separated for the night.

(To be Continued.)

QUIET GIRLS.

It would be affectation to pretend that admiration when it is openly expressed is not very sweet to girls. Extremely few people are above the influence of vanity, and maidens, as a class, are certainly not among those who are. There is no valid reason why they should be condemned upon this account.

To wish to be thought well of is a perfectly laudable ambition; indeed it is to be feared that if most persons did not desire to be held in favourable estimation the world would be a very much worse place

than it is. The misfortune is that many well-meaning individuals mistake notoriety for admiration, and in so doing are naturally led to indulge in excesses and follies of various kinds.

It is to be regretted that this is particularly true so far as regards a number of girls who, lacking knowledge of the world and an insight into human nature, are contaminated when they are thrown into association with young men and women of a certain order. You will see them, in their desire to attract notice, unsteadily balancing themselves upon the line which separates the polite from the unpolite, and coquetting with what public opinion has decided to be naughty.

No doubt their intentions are, in most cases, perfectly innocent, and if they were not applauded by unprincipled flatterers, who being tinged with badness themselves, like to make others the same, they would not continue to indulge in their little indiscretions. Unhappily, they are encouraged to believe that they are favourably distinguishing themselves when they are outraging good taste.

There are men who like a girl who talks at a great rate, and indulges in those descriptions of sneering and backbiting which are often mistaken for wit. There are conceited snobs who love a younger woman ten times as much as they would otherwise do if they see that she treats those whom she does not deem it politic to conciliate with something very resembling insolence.

There are beaux who appreciate the creature who is everlastingly giggling, smirking, posing herself in what she deems picturesque attitudes, and shouting utter nonsense at the top of her voice. Quiet girls see this.

They perceive, further, that because they lack what seem to be supposed to be accomplishments, but which are really social vices, they are ignored.

Over and over again are the sweetest natured as well as the cleverest women stigmatised as dull, stupid, and prim, because they are disinclined to shriek and to show all the teeth in their head to the first male who philanthropically condescends to indicate that he is disposed to look with favour upon them.

Quiet girls may feel the manner in which they are often treated or they may not. It is to be hoped, however, that they have the good sense to perceive that they will gain nothing by attempting to imitate their faster and more gushing sisters. The chances are that if they have the inclination they lack the peculiar talent which will enable them to do so successfully.

Thus if they do attempt to be noisy, dippant, and publicly spiteful at the expense of their neighbours the probability is that they will make a bungle of the whole business, and end by feeling thoroughly ashamed of themselves.

To try to do a discreditable thing, and fail, is, perhaps, the most bitter of all failures, and this is a fact which should speak emphatically to those quiet girls who are contemplating some audacious step in order to escape from the obscurity in which they hopelessly languish.

It may as well be stated, that to a noisy, forward, self-assured member of society it is necessary that a girl should have no deep feelings upon any subject, that she shall not think upon matters outside the special sphere of her operations, and that she shall have no person's welfare at heart so much as her own.

In a word, she must neither possess a squeamish taste nor a tender conscience. Now, hosts of quiet girls are burdened with these encumbrances; hence, perhaps, their constant humiliation. If you want to find a girl who is a treasure in the home in which she lives; who does real, honest, substantial work; who possesses the strongest affection of those who thoroughly know and understand her; and who is endowed with as noble a soul as she has a pure mind, look for a quiet girl.

It is from the ranks of the quiet girls that the best wives, and the truest friends, and the hardest workers come.

Of the women who really distinguish themselves by their intellectual achievements the majority are subdued and modest—yet lively and pleasant enough if properly approached—in company. Often treasures, the existence of which has been unsuspected, have been revealed in quiet girls.

It always will be so; for a genuine woman will never show the sterling stuff of which she is made to the first impertinent inquisitor, who may be unworthy alike of her confidence and her regard. She will continue to astonish those who pretend to understand her by rising to heights, when she is summoned thither, which are unapproachable to her complacent and courted critics.

Yet, in spite of all this, it may happen that quiet

girls of the best type may lack the wit, the adaptability to that with which they have no sympathy, the gilbness, and that unlimited faith in themselves which must be possessed by those who desire to attract the notice of the more shallow portion of society.

LAUGHING BROOK.

Just as the shadows began to grow long beside Laughing Brook, two people stepped aside from the road and sat down upon the green bank, apart from each other as two people might who had quarrelled, as indeed they had.

One was a pretty, dark girl, with great black eyes, a wealth of ebony hair, and the sauciest red mouth in the world.

The other a tall, fair young man, wearing a single breasted black coat, and with young clergyman written all over him in the most unmistakable manner.

He was the Rev. Reuben Eden, and the girl at his side was Ada Romer, to whom he was engaged.

He seated himself with as much dignity as one can assume upon the grass.

She flounced herself down with a pout, and pulling off her hat began to pluck at the strings in a nervous sort of way.

"If you are going to tyrannise over me already, I give you fair warning that I shall not bear it," she said. "I've always done as I pleased, and always shall."

"When I asked you to be my wife—" began Reuben Eden.

"You were glad enough to get me," interrupted Ada.

"Let me finish, if you please," said the young clergyman. "When I asked you to be my wife, I thought you understood that the husband is the head of the house. How will it be with us if you cannot be taught that it must be so? We are not married yet, but you should yield to my wishes. It is your duty. I disapprove of that dissipated and worldly young man with whom you have lately been flirting. You have, of course, not forgotten that you will one day promise to obey me. How can you do that if you refuse to regard my wishes now?"

"If your wishes are absurd—if your commands should be ridiculous—I shall always refuse regard and obedience," said the girl.

"Then, as I shall be master in my own house, our home would be a very uncomfortable one," said the young man.

"So decidedly uncomfortable that I believe it beat that everything should be at an end between us," said the girl, flushing hotly.

"That, at least, is a sensible remark," said the clergyman.

Then she, growing white as death, took from her finger a tiny diamond engagement-ring and held it towards him; and he, whiter than she, took it from her and quietly tossed it into Laughing Brook. The hands of a thousand little water spirits seemed to catch it as the tiny rapids swept it away over the glistening rocks beneath. Over each brown head it sparkled and flashed, and then was gone.

Then a dignified young clergyman slowly walked one way and a very pretty young lady, with her round hat very much over her eyes, took the other, without the ceremony of leave-taking. But, oh, the pain and rage in her heart, and, oh, the rage and pain in his.

She loved him dearly, though she was an innocent little flirt and liked dancing too much, and he loved her as men only love once, though he was conceited and intolerant, as a very young clergyman often is.

The girl had done no harm. If she had she was frank enough to have owned it and begged forgiveness.

And though a twinge of jealousy had caused her lover to make mountains out of molehills, his rule would have been gentle when the little soul who had begun to dread it was once his own.

But there, beside Laughing Brook, their ways diverged. They saw each other no more.

The village gossips knew of a woman that the affair was off.

But though months went by, there were no symptoms that "the minister" was looking elsewhere for a wife, nor did Ada bestow any peculiar favour on any of the village beaux.

A year passed—two. The clergyman still lived alone in his parsonage, and Ada Romer kept house for her grandfather in the old mansion at the edge of the village.

Now and then she would go down to the margin of Laughing Brook and sit watching the water, that had swept away her ring, with a very grave face. But he took long detours to avoid the spot; and when the wind, setting that way, brought the voice of Laughing Brook to the parsonage study, he would rise and shut the windows and shut it out.

He had done this the very day when, waking suddenly in the middle of the night, he was aware of a strange, flickering, vermillion glow across his ceiling, and, jumping out of bed, saw from his window that the Romer mansion on the hill beyond was one great sheet of flame, and only he seemed to be aware of the fact.

All the village slumbered, and about the house itself no figures moved. They were being burnt in their beds, or smothered—they! nay, she, his Ada, as he called her at that moment, uttering her name for the first time for two years.

Hastily clothing himself, he rushed out of the house and over the hill, crying "Fire!" as he ran. Windows opened at the cry. He heard voices uttering screams of amazement.

The alarm was given; but was it now of any avail? He stood before the house, and saw every window fast shut but one upon the second floor.

This the flames had not yet reached.

Under a great pear-tree stood a ladder. It was a very heavy one. At ordinary times his hands, unused to anything heavier than the pen, could not have stirred it. Now he found no difficulty in carrying it to the window, and placing it so that he could ascend by it. This done, up he went and in at the casement. Great clouds of blinding smoke greeted him as he entered; but he groped his way on, shouting as he went. The flames were bursting through the partitions, the paper shrivelling into scrolls. There was an old picture in the passage with a wreath of fire for a frame, and as he turned a glance upon it a red tongue licked out the face, and powdered hair, and white ruffles, and there was nothing left.

This room was here. He knew it. He stood on the threshold, and saw at first only leaden smoke and scarlet blaze. Then, low down on the floor, something the flames had not touched yet—a figure in white.

"Ada!" he cried, and seized it in his arms.

A little worsted shawl had been about the shoulders. He wrapped it over the face and head, and lifted the senseless form in his arms. Then he sped back again, not knowing whether what he held was a living woman or a senseless corpse.

His way was now through fire as well as through smoke, but he reached the window at last, and the crowd below welcomed him with cries and shouts as he appeared upon the ladder, his hair burnt, his lashes scorched, his clothing burning upon him.

The next instant he stood upon the grass and laid his burden down and uncovered its face. The fire had not touched it, and it was the face of a living woman. But as the eyes opened he saw that it was not Ada. He had saved the life of a young servant girl, who had recently come to take service with the Romers.

She—Ada—was still in the burning house!

With a wild cry he dashed toward the door, which had, at last, been battered down.

A sheet of flame rushed out to meet him, and he fell senseless upon the ground.

The next morning the Romer mansion lay in ashes.

The poor girl who had been saved lay raving in delirium, and unable to give any account of the origin of the fire.

And in the darkened rooms of the parsonage the young minister lay suffering and disfigured upon what the doctors had little doubt would be a bed of death.

Three weeks had passed since the fire at Romer mansion.

There had been search amongst its debris; but the bodies of the old man and his granddaughter had not been found.

There it lay, an unsightly heap, which Reuben Eden was glad that he could not see as he sat in his invalid-chair by the window.

The young clergyman was getting better, and one day he would be quite well, but at present he was simply a wreck of his former self.

He was unable to take a step alone, and his eyes had been so injured that it would be months before he could read or write.

Even the faces of those about him were dim and indistinct to his vision.

As for his heart, it would never know peace again, it seemed to him, as he kept saying over and over to himself:

"If I had not quarrelled with Ada she would have

been here beside me, safe and well. She would not have been in the old house when the flames destroyed it, for she would have been my wife."

He was dreadfully miserable, and with the irritability of a convalescent came a detestation of those kind, gossiping matrons who had nursed him so faithfully. He wished them away with all their inquiries and sick-room talk, their camphor, and cologne, and jellies, and good books. And one day he confided to his friend and fellow-clergyman, old Mr. Ormsby, that a man to wait upon him would be a great relief.

"The ladies are so—so oppressively kind, you know," he said.

The other understood. A few days after a little note was brought to him by Deacon Arlington's wife, who was then presiding over the sick room, and who, since he could not read it himself, read it to him:

"DEAR EDEN," it began, "I think you will find the bearer of this, Ching Fo, a very good nurse and attendant. The—Mission brought him over. He understands English perfectly, and is as gentle as a woman, and not as talkative. Try him. Yours, ORMSBY."

"Let the young man come up," said Mr. Eden.

And forthwith entered a little creature with a long, blue, cotton blouse and wooden shoes—a costume scarcely masculine in effect, with his long hair braided in a pig-tail, and his eyes cast humbly to the ground.

Mr. Eden engaged him at once, and the lady members of his little flock were secretly delighted. Even a young clergyman, when he becomes as cross as Mr. Eden was in his uncomfortable convalescence, grows wearisome.

Ching Fo was installed at the parsonage, and in the little slippers which he wore in the house went noiselessly about his work, and petted and nursed his master with a strange tenderness. He never spoke unless spoken to; but when he was not busy, he liked to sit on a low stool close to Mr. Eden's chair, and Mr. Eden liked the little man well. Once, as he crouched there, the master's thin hand was outstretched, and rested for a moment on Ching Fo's smooth head.

While it lay there the Japanese sat quite still, but when it was about to be removed he caught it and pressed it to his lips, and showered kisses on it.

"He has a tender heart," thought Mr. Eden.

Winter was gone. Spring had come. All the grass about Laughing Brook was green, and fresh, and tender. The young leaves were on the trees at his window.

The young minister, whose vision was yet dim, could hear the lap and ripple of the water over the stones.

He did not shut it out now. It seemed to him as though the memories of his dead love hung so closely about Laughing Brook that if spirits could return to earth, hers would revisit that spot of all others. At least those fond remembrances that, if they are not the spirits of those we have lost, serve us in their stead, would fill his heart beside its shady margin, and he might beguile himself into a fancy that he was waiting, as he had often waited, for her coming step. At last he determined that he would go thither.

"Ching Fo," he said to his little Japanese, "can you wheel me as far as the brook yonder?"

The servant replied by retreating behind his master's invalid-chair, and no more was said until, by quiet paths, they had come to the side of Laughing Brook—nay, to the very spot where he parted from Ada, where he had thrown their troth-plight ring into the water.

Then she stood beside him, living, young, and beautiful. Then he was strong and active and full of vigour.

To-day she lay dead, dead amidst the ashes of her ruined home, and he, a helpless, half-blind invalid, sat there alone: and all might have been so different.

He put his head down upon his hands, and the tears would not be crushed back.

"If I could have only have died with her," he said to himself, "it would have been so much better."

Meanwhile, Ching Fo, who must have had some sorrow of his own, cried softly behind his chair. But Ching Fo's eyes were bright even when wet with tears; and, as he wiped them away, he caught sight of something amongst the pebbles of the pond that glittered and flashed with strange brightness, and leaving his master's side, he crept forward and stopped with a low cry, and caught at it, whatever it was, and hid it in his bosom.

"Oh, I have found it!" he cried.

And Reuben Eden, starting from his bitter reverie, said:

"What have you found that so surprises you?"

"A little ring, sir," said Ching Fo.

"A ring?" said Mr. Eden. "Give it to me."

"Pardon," said Ching Fo. "I found it. Let me keep it."

"Not if it is what I think it," said his master. "I will give you another ring, or more than its value in money. But if it is a woman's ring set with a diamond, with 'Ada from Reuben' engraved within, I must have it."

"It is the ring," said the Japanese.

He advanced and put it into his master's hand.

"Ching Fo," said Reuben Eden, "you are a good, tender-hearted fellow. Let me tell you why I love this ring so well. It belonged to the girl who should have been my wife. She is dead now. I tried to save her, but in vain. I—oh, I was cruel to her—cruel, cruel—and this is all I have left. I deserve it—I deserve it!"

He dropped his head passionately upon his arm; but two smaller arms lifted it up; a soft cheek pressed his, lips touched his scarred forehead.

"Oh, Reuben!" cried a voice, full of all the tenderness of love, "you did love me, after all."

It was Ching Fo who spoke—Ching Fo, who showered these kisses on the aching eyes, and fondled and caressed him—Ching Fo, and not Ching Fo.

"In Heaven's name, speak again!" cried Reuben Eden. "Tell me who you are?"

And though the voice only answered, "No, no, let me go," it was enough.

"Ada," he said, and held her fast, "Ada, no, I will never let you go again. Since you are not dead, but living, since you have stooped your woman's pride to minister to me in this disguise, you must love me. Take the ring again—put it upon your finger. I have made a fool of myself, but Heaven only knows how bitterly I have paid for it."

"I never meant you should find me out," said she. "I heard that you could scarcely see, and you believed me dead. I grieved for you so bitterly, and grandpa, who could not bear to come to the old place, sent me down when he heard what had happened. We were not in the house when the fire broke out; we were away on a visit; and before Gretchen, whose life you saved, was sensible enough to tell people that, her friends had taken her home."

"When I came down here I met the little Japanese, who had been sent to you by chance, and he really looked like me, and was much my size. I told him you would not be a kind master, and sent him to some one I know who has wanted a Japanese servant for a long while, and I bought two of his suits and got his letter of recommendation; and grandpa thinks I am visiting Jane Lorne; and, oh, indeed, I meant to go away before you could guess at the truth, my poor, blind darling?"

"And you must go before any one else guesses it," said the man, with a sudden remembrance of evil tongues. "But you will come back to me in your own person? You will promise that, Ada? You will be my wife?"

Ada promised.

That night the Japanese servant disappeared. The next day the village was astonished by the news that Grandfather Romer and his pretty granddaughter were alive; and long before he was strong of limb and eyesight again, the minister had a wife, over whose wedding-ring glistened the diamond that Laughing Brook had kept for her for two long years.

M. K. A.

IMPROVED WATER WHEEL.—Reuben D. Sayre Westville, Ohio.—This invention consists of the buckets of an overshot or breast wheel, pivoted to the wheel rims so as to remain upright and hold the water until the centre is reached at the bottom, when they are tilted by a cam to empty the water, by which the wheel retains all the water as long as it can do any good, and the weight can be applied farther from the centre of the wheel by pivoting the buckets at the periphery of the wheel rims. The buckets are pivoted to the wheel rims at or near the periphery so as to remain upright and hold all the water as long as it is efficient, when they are tilted by a crank and cam and the water emptied, after which they return to the upright position again while ascending to the place for receiving the water, the cam being continued up to the top to prevent the buckets from tilting too far to come back again to the upright position. In front of each bucket is a cross bar, to prevent it from being overturned by the water falling into it from the spout. In practice, the cam for tilting the buckets will be constructed so as to revolve to lessen the friction as much as possible.

THE HEN AND THE TAILOR.

A WEN who had saved a tailor from drowning in a marine disaster that had cost several of his less fortunate companions their lives, asked him his opinion of the theory of evolution. The grateful tailor replied that he himself was an instance of the survival of the fittest; and the philosophical wren remarking that it was vulgar to pun, walked off with much dignity to resume her interrupted occupation of hatching out a China nest egg.

Moral.—Some people cannot take a joke.

ENGAGED.

The conduct of engaged couples does not differ as widely as we might expect, so many are the conventional rules appointed to be observed on these occasions. Now and then we meet with a proud girl who refuses to be congratulated in the ordinary form, and who turns the subject or leaves the room when her approaching marriage is mentioned. For the most part such girls are really in love, and cannot bear to have what they look upon as sacred touched by rude fingers.

It is fortunate to be made the subject of quizzing and feeble jokes. A sense of delicacy revolts from profiting by the opportunities made for the lovers' meeting, and prying eyes render her position embarrassing and intolerable.

Sometimes, too, a girl professes complete indifference to her intended husband. She will not be seen speaking to him. She openly laughs at sentiment, and disdains the existence of true love. She sneers at moonlight walks, and keeps her engagement under her work-basket.

Yet her feelings, such as they are, may be well calculated to stand the test of time and matrimony. It is, perhaps, more pleasing to watch the behaviour of the young girl who is delighted with her lover and her prospects. You are expected to congratulate her, not as a matter of form, but as it were spontaneously. You may see no great reason for congratulation. If a brilliant prospect is before her, you may think a different prospect might have been yet more brilliant.

Her charms, you think, are such that she is almost thrown away upon the commonplace object of her choice. You cannot see his perfections from her point of view, and would look forward to spending a lifetime in his company with anything but pleasure.

But you cannot reveal such feelings to her, let your knowledge of her be ever so intimate. She would think you cruel, hard-hearted, nay, worse, than all, matter-of-fact. The mere suspicion of common sense would destroy all the charm of the romance in her mind. She receives your congratulations with undigested pleasure, and evidently believes all you can possibly invent or say as to her good luck, her future happiness, her certainty of an exemplary husband.

She would take it almost amiss if you hinted that the luck was all the other way, and that you look upon her lover as more fortunate than herself. She expects you to see through her eyes or not at all, and as she takes off her glove you know that she wishes you to admire a diamond ring on her third finger, and to ask her for the photograph of her sister to place opposite to hers in your book.

These little traits are shown only at the first. As time goes on she settles down to a more prosaic view of things.

If you are in her confidence, she expects you to sit beside her and ask for biographical particulars concerning her intended, and to give her advice as to the management of her future household. After a long interval even these topics cease to be touched, and she gradually becomes more like other people, always retaining a certain sense of her importance, and taking precedence in the family circle even of her elder sisters.

But it is to members of her own sex that she is more especially interesting. Your partner at a ball or a dinner-table, if you remark on another lady of the party, very often adds to her account the almost whispered remark that she is engaged. This is always with certain emphasis, as if it must be a point of the last importance.

Though you should admire her yourself, the chances are that you do not feel particularly impressed by the information.

Engaged, you reflect, does not mean married. But apparently, and to judge from the way the engagement is spoken of, it means even more; and if you venture to talk flippantly about love and marriage, you will probably be very shortly and severely reprimanded.

The behaviour of the engaged couple affords the idle spectator much food for amusing reflection, and not their behaviour only, but that of the family towards them.

If they enter a room together, every one flies from it immediately as if they had the smallpox. If you come upon them in the library alone, you may not so much as pause to find your book, but must precipitately retreat, taking care to shut the door.

The gentleman does not always seem to enjoy these conditions. He may not find conversation very ready to hand, and may even like the society of others of his own sex.

He may look back regretfully to the time when he could talk to her sisters, or rather when they were still willing to talk to him. He may be so cold-blooded as to anticipate a time when he and his wife will see almost too much of each other.

When they go out to walk or ride he may prefer the company of the elder sister, who is a horse-woman; or the younger, who sketches. He may like the singing of one, the wit of another, or possibly even the lenia of a third. But he is not allowed to enjoy any of these things.

Sisters who are loyal to each other would consider it shocking. He is bound to the one and the one only, and it is sad to see him sometimes when a stampede takes place at his coming, and so helplessly looks after the retreating figures, and seats himself with an ill-suppressed yawn by the side of the engaged one.

Hardly less trying is the fate of the lover who finds himself taken as a brother by the whole family at once, who has to kiss all his new friends, and submit to the same familiarity, and even the same lectures, which their real brothers bear so badly.

He cannot call them "girls" with a contemptuous accent on the word, nor can he shake himself loose from their embraces with "rubbish" as a stronger expression. They give him commissions to execute in towns which their brothers have long since refused to undertake, and expect him to pay out of his own pocket for everything he gets them.

In fact, he finds his position very unenviable, and, if he fails to divert their attention by bringing a friend upon the scene as a second victim to the family charms, he probably concludes his ladylove's confidence to her that he is not engaged to all her sisters as well as to her, and only intends to marry one of the family.

In some houses, too, a different kind of tribulation befalls the happy pair. They are never left alone together. Some mothers keep up the chaperon system in all its rigour till the knot is indissolubly tied.

Perhaps, much as they may dislike it, the mother is wise in this. Those stolen kisses are very sweet, those squeezes of the hand at parting, those brief glances, those chance meetings which have about them so much of a delightful, naughty flavour.

In one respect, however, not even parents of this kind are hard-hearted. The young people can correspond, and, on the lady's side at least, this is not a small privilege.

Boris does not find it easy perhaps to write letters which do not mean any air of business about them, and wastes much paper and ink in notes which he tears up unused.

But Angeline scribbles away. While she is thus engaged an axe-struck hush pervades the morning-room. She must not be interrupted on any account.

The sisters talk in a whisper, and if they wonder what on earth she can have to write in such quantities, they keep the wonder to themselves, only wishing their own turn may come soon. She covers side after side without a pause, and it is well if she does not cross.

PASSAGE OF ELECTRICITY THROUGH GASES.

The author inserted in the circuit of an induction current a variable spark interval, a strong resistance in form of a tube with blue vitriol solution, which could be shortened or lengthened, and a galvanometer, and observed each time how much the liquid resistance had to be changed, in order, after determining change of the spark interval, to obtain the same deflection of the galvanometer. The spark path was enclosed in a glass sphere in which the gas and the pressure could be varied.

The conclusions arrived at are stated briefly thus:

1. Gases conduct electricity, in the glowing state, like metallic conductors. The induction spark is a suitable means for the comparative experiments.

2. The conductivities of gases at ordinary pressure are not considerably different from each other. Perhaps this difference may be attributed to differ-

ences of temperature of the spark interval in the separate gases.

3. With decreasing pressure, the conductivity of gases increases very considerably. At small pressures, the gases differ very little from each other.

4. With less strength of the arc current, there is a decrease of the conductivity, probably due to the less temperature of the gas.

5. The conductivities of gases for electricity and heat stand in no close relation to each other.

6. The values found for the specific resistances investigated are to be distinguished from the resistances at the beginning of the discharge, which have before been investigated by other physicists.

AN INTERESTING ILLUSION.

TAKE a sheet of writing paper and fold it into a tube an inch in diameter. Apply it to the right eye and look steadily through it, focusing the eye on any convenient object: keep the left eye open. Now place the left hand, held palm upward, sideways against the side of the paper tube, and about an inch or two above its lower end.

The astonishing effect will be produced of a hole, apparently of the size of the cross section of the tube, made through the left hand. This is the hole in which we propose to materialise another and smaller hole.

As we need a genuine aperture, and it would be inconvenient to make one in the left hand, let a sheet of white paper be substituted therefore and similarly held.

Just at the part of the paper where the hole equaling in diameter the orifice of the tube appears, make an opening a quarter of an inch in diameter. Now stare intently into the tube; and the second hole, defined by its difference of illumination, will be seen floating in the first hole, and yet both will be transparent.

The illusion, for of course it is one of those odd pranks our binocular vision plays upon us, is certainly one of the most curious ever devised. Besides, here is the actual hole clearly visible, and yet there is its solid body to be seen to definite edges.

It is not a mere spot of light, because, if a page of print be regarded, the lines within the boundaries of the hole hole will not coincide at all with those surrounding it and extending to the edges of the large apparent aperture.

Each eye obviously transmits an entirely different impression to the brain, and that organ, unable to disentangle them, lands us in the palpable absurdity of a materialised hole.

HIS EVIL GENIUS.

CHAPTER XV.

WE had arrived in the very street, and in front of my uncle's house, before I had at all realised my situation or my strange errand, or indeed made up my mind how to attempt even to gain admittance at such an unwarrantable hour, more particularly under the sad existing circumstances.

A very feeble light showed a glimmer through a partly open shutter.

It was in the very room in which, as I had instantly recognised, with a cold feeling of pain, which seemed to freeze up my very brain within my skull, all that remained of the poor darling girl was lying; and I felt sure that by that feeble light Harrison probably, or one of the female servants, must be sitting up watching.

All the rest of the house was shut up entirely, and seemed, perhaps from the contrast of that single light, all the more profoundly wrapped in profound quiet and stillness.

I at first hoped and endeavoured to attract the attention of whoever it might be who was watching within that awful room, by calling the name of Harrison three or four times, but at the same time knowing how nervous and liable to terror she would most likely be, I was afraid to raise my voice much above a loud whisper.

"Oh, this won't do at all!" cried De Lyons, losing all patience; "confound it, man! can't you understand or believe what I tell you; that it is a matter of life and death?"

And again working himself up into a state of excitement, he seized hold of the bell handle, and began to tug at it with all his might and main, as he had

before done at my own, when determined to rouse me.

"Never mind the consequences! This no time for mincing matters or humbergging about ceremony. I tell you that we, or rather you, must make them let you in, Lambert, or you will be too late—too late to save her from a horrible death; so here goes again, till I make the whole street hear us!"

"What?" cried a woman's voice from the window, which was opened a little way.

Perfectly agitated as I was at my companion's reckless assault upon the door, and judging, as I well could, of what must be its effects, and the feeling of those within, sorrow-stricken, and weighed down with grief as they of course were, my first impulse was to rush away anywhere to hide myself out of sight for ever, rather than be discovered as participating in what I felt conscious must appear such an outrage upon all common decency, or even humanity.

I think I must have yielded to that impulse, only that I felt afraid of being recognised in the light of one of the few and far between street lamps which happened to be almost directly opposite the door.

I instinctively shrunk myself up into the recess of the entrance, where I could not be seen from the windows above.

"What?" again asked the person at the window, and then another voice added in almost a shout (of course in German) that, whoever we might be, we would kindly depart quietly and not disturb the house of mourning; "for we are visited at this moment with a most grievous affliction, and death is now in this house, in this very chamber. Whoever you are, as Christians we entreat you to desist and leave us undisturbed in our deep grief to mourn in quiet over the loss of our poor child, who has this night been taken from us."

It was my poor aunt herself. I knew the tones of her sad voice, and I stepped out of my hiding place in the door-way into the street.

"Mrs. De Lornie, it is only me," I said. "My dearest aunt, do not be frightened, but for heaven's sake send down to the front door, and let me come in. I must come in this very instant—it is a matter of life and death; and though it was not me kicking up that tremendous noise with the bell, or knocking at the door in that awful way, yet come in I must, I tell you; and if you will believe in me, and only trust me, I can and will save dear Katie, and restore her alive to you yet."

I then was standing out right under the full lamp light, such as it was, in order that she might see and recognise me, and so not be alarmed, or think that robbers or assassins were come to attack the house.

It had never occurred to me that I was at this time wearing the soaked towel bound tight round my temples, just as Taraxacum had tied it, to bring me to my proper senses; and thus arrayed I had come out of my lodgings without a hat, or any other covering to my head: my coat was flung loosely over my shoulders with the sleeves tied round my neck, instead of my absent neckcloth; and what with my several immersions, first in the tub and subsequently in the fountain-place, it is no great wonder that I presented a somewhat dilapidated, not to say ghastly appearance.

"You must indeed let me come in," I again vociferated. "For Heaven's sake, let me in before it is too late, and while there is time to save her, as indeed I can if you will only let me. Don't you know me? Dear aunt, it is me, Frank Lambert, your nephew."

"Lor!" exclaimed Mrs. Harrison, somewhat profoundly (but she was always a privileged character in the establishment, and rather given to the use of strange modes of expression), as she shoved her head violently out over my aunt's shoulder—"If it isn't your very own nephew, ma'am, that Mr. Lambert himself is in company, too, with one of them students, and both of 'em, a' help me scrupulously, seeming to my senses 'a' as tipsy 'a' as I owls."

"Harrison!" I cried, "come down directly and let me in! Do you hear me? I say, for Heaven's sake, come down and open the door to me!"

She drew her head in again without vouchsafing me any sort of answer to my most earnest appeal; but as she did so, I could hear her say to my aunt, "Now, ma'am, had I best go for to rouse up the colonel, ma'am, or do you seem to think we had better both sneak out for the police?"

"I was becoming desperate, but once again I appealed to them; and that they might understand me, I spoke with a forced distinctness and precision."

"Harrison, confound your stupid tongue! Aunt indeed, I am perfect master of myself, and all right, but I do, and must insist upon coming in; and if you are not going to allow me to do so, the proper way immediately and quietly, I must do my best to

gain an entrance as I can; but to come in somehow I am quite determined."

The window from which this parley was taking place was no higher from the ground level, and as I, in my anxiety, mounted up upon the top door-step, I saw that it would require no very great effort of activity to have caught hold of the window-sill in a spring from where I was standing, and to have clambered in.

It did cross my mind to make the attempt, and so away the forty-fourth by assault; but unless absolutely driven to that resource by a direct refusal of admittance, I should have been sorry to have decorated that awful chamber where poor Katie's remains were resting, by what I felt must, at any rate, at the time, have appeared a most unbecoming, not to say disgraceful act of violence, against two women, whom probably it would have frightened out of their very wits.

I went so far as to threaten it, however, and I heard a fierce parley going on inside between the mistress and maid, both talking hard at once, and I rather fancy, under the erroneous impression that it was in a whisper.

Whilst again almost considering whether I should act, as time grew short, be driven to extremes, I found that the two had come down together to the other side of the street door, for I could hear them still cockling through the key-hole; presently the lock turned, the chain inside clanked, and the door, though I was expecting it to do so, opened so suddenly that I was scared, and it was sharply shut to again before I knew where I was.

It was pitch dark, they had not brought a light down with them, and before I had recovered my senses, I felt myself violently seized hold upon on each side; my arm on one arm, and her abigail on the other, hanging on like grim death with their white wrists round me; and, dash and if I didn't feel that much Harrison, for though I could not see I knew which was her by the suddenness of her arms, which were slipping into the muscle of my arm through my shirt-sleeves.

Dash me, if she wasn't jumbling with her stay-lace it may have been, trying her very best to tie my hands behind my back.

"There now, Franky, dearest," said my aunt in a soft soothing, coaxing sort of voice, as if she were speaking to a child; "I am sure you wouldn't wish to wake your poor uncle, would you, dear? who has only just got off at last into his first sleep; and surely, Franky, you cannot have forgotten all that we have been through this dreadful, dreadful day? Then he shall come, the dear-boy, with his own aunt who loves him, and will take care of him. He shall have the spare room, and go to bed there till the morning, and have a good night's rest, and stay with us quietly till he is better, and quite recovered, and perhaps in time we may all hope to get through our dreadful loss, our bitter, bitter sorrow for that poor darling child, by the dear dead upstairs."

"She is not lying dead," I said very earnestly. "She is nothing of the sort, I will convince you. I do assure you, aunt, if you will only let me go up to the room quietly—come up with me yourself—the shall wake up from the trance in which she has been laid, for that is what she is in, and can and shall be restored to you; I wish I could make you believe me, when I tell you that I have been through nearly the same myself, though it has less effect upon me—I have, indeed, my dear aunt—since I parted with you this very evening."

"I am not intoxicated; I have not touched food, let alone wine or any sort of liquor since two o'clock to-day, and then my dinner was scarcely more than nominal."

"Come, Harrison," I said, "none of that nonsense, if you please, as I demolished her ligatures with a snap; but now just let me go upstairs, aunt, quickly, and look upon her once more; and then, if I am not as good as the word, I will submit to any condition or do anything you tell me. I solemnly promise you."

I do not know whether they would have acceded. They were still clinging on to me with all the weight they could make of themselves, and I could hear Harrison grinding her very teeth, in her anxiety to keep me fast, when just at that moment a door opened at the end of the passage, going off as it did, from the top of the first flight of stairs, up which we had gradually all worked along together, in a kind of struggling scuffle; and, behold, my uncle, the colonel, appeared with a light in his hand.

"Hollo! what an eerie is the master now?" I heard his gruff voice demanding. "Who have you got there? Is there any one wounded, or breaking into the house?"

Both my assailants turned round as he spoke, and in an instant I jumped clear of them.

I was not very sorry to see Mrs. Harrison spinning on her own axis, on the mat at the foot of the flight of half-a-dozen steps up which we had been struggling.

They had not shut the door of the room when they had come down to let me in; I could see the light burning there; I did not stop to think of propriety, or ceremony, perhaps I should rather say, or anything of the sort, but ran quickly up, and in another moment was by the bedside where poor Katie lay, moved and arranged since I had seen her, as I had then thought, for the last time for ever.

The lamplight shone full upon her face, calm, and more beautiful than ever. An instantaneous, though most fervent prayer rose from my heart to my lips, that De Lyons' strong convictions and promises might prove true.

The strange effects which I had myself experienced, naturally, I suppose, tended to confirm my own belief and confidence more than would perhaps otherwise have been the case.

I felt that I prayed for faith, and with full faith at the moment did I gently lay the lock of hair and the jewel with it, though separate, upon her white delicate hands, which were now placed crossed upon her bosom.

As I did so, my eye was caught by a tumbler nearly full of water in which a few fresh-gathered flowers had been placed upon the table by the bedside; taking out the flowers, I dashed the water all over her face and neck.

At that very moment I felt myself violently seized and pinioned from behind. It was the colonel who, as soon as he heard who it was, had hurried up after me, and now was holding me in the grips of a lion.

"Pray, oh, pray be very gentle with him, dearest George. Command yourself, and only be gentle!" I heard my sweet cry, who had hurried up after her husband, to the door. "Pray don't hurt him, poor fellow! You know it is not his fault. For your poor child's sake, and mercy, be very gentle with him."

I did not attempt to resist. I had carried through my intention, and done what I wanted, so I did not care any longer to struggle, even if it would have been any use, holding me at an advantage as the old was, with all his force.

He had turned me round and was walking me quite unresistingly to the door; we were just leaving the room, actually in the very doorway, when, by Heaven! we all turned round with a start.

A sudden start, indeed, and not without reason for it too.

It was dear Katie's voice, very gentle, and as if not half awake:

"Harrison," she called lowly, though quite distinctly, "Harrison—ma'am, dear, see you there too? Oh, I am so glad that I am here, so glad to have come back again to you! I thought I should never, never have been allowed to see any of you again!"

I felt my heart give such a bound within me, it seemed like the snap of some spring. I only wonder now that it did not kill me on the spot.

The colonel stood for an instant also, as if paralysed, then dropped his hold of my arms, and in another instant was on his knees by his daughter's bedside.

As to old Harrison, before I knew what she was at she had wound her skinny arms round my neck from behind, in a hug nearly as tight as the colonel's had been, and set to to kiss andlobber all down my cheeks and neck. I should like to have tweaked her stupid old neck for her; as it was I had to kick up pretty sharply behind, before I could get her off.

Well, explain it as you like, or think you can, it is all positive fact that I have been telling you, impossible or incredible as you may think it or not. As long as I live it is not very likely that I shall ever forget that extraordinary scene, though of course there are particulars which I may not now have told you quite exactly.

I went down to the front door and there found Taraxacum, who had faithfully been waiting all the time. When I told him the result, the fulfilment of his prognostications—instantly nailing me on the spot for the promise of an introduction the very first opportunity, which, under the peculiar circumstances, I do not exactly see how I could have refused—he betook himself off to some favourite Keller or haunt, alleging that it was too late by that time to be worth going to bed; and, as I heard afterwards, celebrated his joy and self-contentment for having taken part in so very successful and praiseworthy an action, by getting so awfully tipsy that it required the whole energies of Rample Stilkins and no less than four of his caddy-coloured comrades to carry him home to his own quarters, at some advanced hour of the morning.



[THE WORKING OF THE SPELL.]

You may well understand that after all I had gone through mentally, as well as physically, my desperate tussle with, and then the hugging I had undergone from Harrison, by no means to be considered as the least of my trials—when I did get back to my own lodgings, I was in no particular humour for either explanations or recriminations with old Mother Slanngarts, my landlady, whom, notwithstanding her nocturnal disturbances, I found up, and evidently lying in wait for me.

It was by the time I turned into my own street broad daylight, a fresh and beautiful summer morning.

There was no avoiding her, for there she stood exactly in the centre of the open doorway.

To the courteous salutation of "Guten Morgen, Frau Slanngarts," she only vouchsafed a sort of husky grunt by way of response, and followed up what might be considered as the opening gun of a battery, with a volley of musketry in the shape of invectives and reproaches, interspersed with occasional flights of rockets or shells, as far as I could judge of them by the tone of voice in which they were launched at me, in the form of sarcasms so stunning, that they seemed almost to take her own breath away.

Not only did the old dragon go in at me personally on the score of inebriety, irregularity of hours, and morality, or rather every sort of immorality which could be laid to any individual's charge, but also upon the iniquities of my friends in particular, and even my compatriots in general, for whom I felt it utterly useless even to attempt to make her understand that I could not pretend to hold myself responsible.

Fortunately, it was, of course, entirely in her native vernacular, and delivered as it was, with an unparalleled volubility, much that I have no doubt was impressive, if not valuable, as reflection and advice, was lost upon my untutored ears.

So, watching my opportunity, and dodging beneath her swinging arms, which, with the full force of natural eloquence were marking the emphasis of her discourse, I slipped into my own room, and, as we used to call it at college, sported my door before she could well turn upon me, so that the remainder of her observations, even, if possible, increased in intensity, were delivered through the keyhole at me, as I tumbled out of my clothes and into my bed, and in less than two minutes was fast asleep; though, for all I

know to the contrary, the old shrew may have been nagging at me for another hour or more.

It was, I know, getting on into the afternoon before I awoke, refreshed and peckish enough, and I was just giving myself a preliminary stretch and roll over in my bed, before taking that important step which one always—or I will speak for myself, at least—hates so much, from my warm bed into my cold slippers, when my eye was caught by a piece of paper on the floor, which had evidently been thrust in at the bottom of the door.

No less did it prove than a formally drawn up document, commencing with a closely written epitome of the lecture I had undergone in the early morning, and terminating with a notice to quit forthwith, and to carry myself and my goods and chattels elsewhere.

Trusting that the storm would blow over, I thought the best way would be to ignore and take no notice of the matter, so refolding it I just threw it back to the spot from which I had picked it up.

And later, when the deeply-injured and frangible old lady brought me in my breakfast, and having carefully picked up the cartel had laid it upon the tray before me; I then, without pretending to be aware of the action, thanked her, and tearing it across proceeded to light my cigarette with it.

I thought she was going to break out again, but she seemed taken aback, and I had somehow got her out of my room again before she could find utterance to her wrath. Perhaps she had entirely exhausted her magazine of ideas and indignant objurgations at her previous attack: anyhow she was round, and outside, and the door between us, without having again had time to open fire, and I flattered myself that if she had proper time to cool, we should go on again all right, and that I should hear no more about it; but there I reckoned without mine host, or I should rather say mine hostess; but those Germans when they do get an idea into their most obtuse heads, are a pig-headed and very stiff-necked style of animal.

In the meantime, however, my predominant idea, even I think before that of going down to Luttichau Strasse to inquire after, or perhaps, as I dared to hope, even see Katie, and under the strange concatenation of circumstances, make out how matters were likely to be going on there; my first idea, I say, was to lose no time in finding out that little arch-fiend Gorles, and bring him to a reckoning for his sins and iniquities.

I had fully made up my mind, as soon as I had

caught him, to smash, crush, and utterly demolish him, like any other venomous nauseous insect or reptile, then and there.

I did not look for any explanation, or intend entering into any argument with him. I felt that I should probably be baffled, or that by some of his tricks or jugglery he might escape me.

I was conscious that I could bring no exactly definite proof or evidence against him. I had formed no plan of how I should begin, as to what I should say, or even do exactly, when I should, as I was resolved, have got hold of him, beyond his immediate annihilation.

Yes, it undoubtedly was, as most things are somehow, for the best, that I had not the slightest idea where he lived, or where I should be likely to find him.

Taraxacum; to whom I naturally looked for certain information in that respect, was, when I called upon him (as I think I have already incidentally mentioned), far too much overpowered by his joyous feelings, to say nothing of the glorious celebration of the said feelings, which did his heart, if not his head, so much credit; the state he was in being, as he afterwards explained, entirely on my account, and in the cause of real sympathy and friendship; but he was far too heavily asleep to have the slightest chance of being fit to come out with or in any way be of any use to me.

Later I sent up a note by Rumpel Stillekins, who had faithfully to his promise called early, and had been hanging about the door the whole morning till I could admit him—it was from him I learnt the particulars about De Lyons.

I had also inquired the abode, or most usual haunts of Gorles, but he was, or professed himself ignorant on the point; though promising to lose no time in finding out for me.

On this special errand I despatched him, giving him at the same time a note, which I meant by way of an ice-breaker for Luttichau Strasse, announcing my intention, with the sanction of the colonel and my aunt, to whom it was addressed, of looking in there in the evening.

In less than twenty minutes the trusty Stillekins was back again, bringing my own undelivered note in his hand, and with the astounding information that the De Lornes, with their whole family and establishment, were gone, and that the house, or at least the part of it which they had occupied, was all closed and empty.

(To be Continued.)



[CAUGHT IN THE ACT.]

CLYTIE CRANBOURNE;

—OR—

BUILT UPON SAND.

By the Author of "The Earl's Crime," "A Fight for a Peerage," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XII.

"Miss CRANBOURNE, I believe?" said the lady visitor, eyeing Clytie critically, but with no friendly or courteous expression of countenance.

"Yes," was the reply. "You can go, Totts," she added to the dwarfed servant, and then she turned to listen to her visitor's errand.

Did you ever stand and feel that your direct enemy was looking at you; stand and feel yourself pierced by remorseless eyes; your personal defects, nay, your very soul stripped bare before an implacable foe? If not you can never understand or fully realise the sensation with which Clytie Cranbourne stood before the woman who had driven her father from his home a beggar, had deprived herself and brother of position, wealth, protection, and friends, and who was now bent upon accomplishing her complete and absolute ruin.

Not knowing who she was, Clytie yet felt herself in the presence of a foe, and, the first shrinking impulse of terror over, she drew herself up proudly, and looked with questioning dignity, almost sternness, at her visitor.

"Whom have I the honour of addressing?" she asked, while the stranger scanned her face eagerly, as though she would rob her of every line and lineament of beauty.

"You don't know me?" was the imperious question.

"No, I do not."

"Ah, your father knew me; your mother had cause to remember me too. I come from Denborough Castle. Now I suppose you know who I am."

"I can't say that I do; you had better be seated. You bring me a message from my grandfather."

Miss Burlington hesitated a moment, then took the chair indicated.

From this point she could shoot and stab her adversary without mercy.

"You have been expecting to hear from your grandfather?" she half sneered.

"I don't know that I have," replied Clytie, coldly. "Old men sometimes repent of the evil they have done, before they die, and I have thought he might do so likewise; is it for that you have come?"

Still Miss Burlington did not directly reply. She had come only to satisfy her curiosity, to see with whom she had to deal, and she was surprised, disappointed, almost frightened at what she had come to see.

Here was no shrinking, timid girl, led by a silken string and frightened by a frown; but a woman beautiful as a goddess, and with a commanding presence and powerful intellect, that mentally and morally seemed to tower over her enemy, and make all the paltry plots and plans that had been woven about her, appear but like the merest cobwebs, which a good puff of wind would blow away.

If Caroline Burlington had hated her late lover's children before, it was increased tenfold as she gazed on one of them now.

Had Clytie been ugly, mean, and contemptible, she might have forgiven her, and have been content to treat her simply with disdain and scorn.

But to find her so much superior to herself cut into her mean vindictive soul with untold bitterness, and made her feel she must change her tactics at once, if she hoped to carry out her diabolical plan.

"I don't come with your grandfather's knowledge," she said, at length; "at least, not by his express desire, but we had heard strange things about you, and I wished to know if they were true."

"Remembering the great interest and solicitude my grandfather has hitherto evinced towards me, of course he is justified in criticising every act of my life most severely," said Clytie, with bitter irony.

"We cannot forget that you are related to the family, and may possibly, if your brother is dead, succeed to the title," returned Miss Burlington.

"The fact seems to have been forgotten long enough," replied the girl in the same sarcastic strain. "I believe Charlie is alive, and will return however. Therefore your interest in me, as Countess of Denborough in my own right, may possibly cease."

"You seem to have acquired a most unladylike amount of acrimony and self-assertion," returned Miss Burlington, spitefully, "and I can assure you it is by no means becoming to a girl of your age in whatever station of life she may be, but there, one

could expect no other remembering who your mother was."

There was too much real malice and spite in the observation for it to irritate Clytie as much as it was intended to do, and she replied calmly, though with something like a sneer:

"Yes, you must have felt the disappointment keenly, when papa preferred my mother to you."

Miss Burlington bit her lip savagely.

The wound Clytie had touched was as fresh and green as on the very day it was inflicted, and if anything could have intensified the bitter hatred that filled her heart, this allusion would have done so.

She passed over the subject however; this girl was evidently a match for her; in the duel of words, she received as many wounds as she gave, so she went on at once to the ostensible object of her visit.

"I did not come here to bandy words with you," she said, as coldly as she could, "but to ascertain what your position, conduct and mode of life are, and to offer you some assistance in the form of a yearly allowance, if you desire it."

"Do you do this in my grandfather's name?" asked Clytie.

"No, I do it on my own account; it will, of course, be a satisfaction to him if he ever does wish to see you, to know that something has been done to keep you from—well, we will say—low pursuits and worse company."

"A very efficient way of doing so," sneered Clytie; "but you need not concern yourself about me, madame, I am quite able to take care of myself. If my grandfather at any time wishes to see me, I shall be glad to come to him; have the kindness to tell him so, and for any offer of help or communication from or with any other member of my father's family, I decline it. They have left me to stand alone so long, that now I can do so without their assistance."

"But do you know how the world looks upon a woman who lives alone in the independent manner that you do?" asked Miss Burlington.

"No, neither do I much care, and, as it has been a matter of necessity, not choice, if I am blamed, so be it."

"I am come to offer you a home with some friends of the earl, people who will take care of you and instruct you in the usages of good society."

"Thank you, Uncle Edward offered me a home in his house too. I accepted it, but found it necessary to run away after a time. I might do the same with

your friends, so to avoid such ungracious conduct, I will decline it at once."

"You had better consider what you are doing, and what you refuse," said Miss Burlington in a warning tone; "it is an offer that will not be made a second time."

"I hope not. I am not fond of such scenes as these and time with me is precious. Please remember what I now say. I wish for no kindness or favours from my father's family, the time when they would have been welcome and I should have accepted them gratefully, is passed. If my grandfather wishes to see me before he dies, and sends for me, then I will come; and remember also, that I am twenty-two years of age, and a child no longer."

And Clytie, not caring exactly to tell her visitor to go, and yet anxious to be rid of her, turned to the painting on which she had been working all day, and began to add certain touches to unimportant parts of it.

Caroline Burlington's eyes followed her with an evil light in them, then her gaze rested on the figures portrayed on the canvas, and recognising two of the portraits with a start—Charles because of his likeness to his dead father—she asked, abruptly:

"What is that?"

"I call it 'Sold to his Death,'" was the reply.

"Ah, Edward Cranbourne will feel flattered," said Miss Burlington with a malicious laugh. "Not a bad idea, if it were only better executed. I suppose you expect to be a famous artist one day—it is a delusion I know that people of your sort fall into."

"I should think you knew very little about people of my sort," replied Clytie, continuing to paint, and vouching that her intensely disagreeable and irritating visitor would go.

"No, perhaps I don't; most women would have been glad of a respectable home, but I suppose I am to understand that you positively refuse the one I am come to offer you."

"Yes, you are to quite understand it. I am satisfied to work out my own course alone. I distrust you and your offers of assistance, and I will have nothing whatever to do with you. I am sorry you compel me to speak so very plainly," and once more she turned to her work.

Miss Burlington rose to her feet.

It was useless prolonging this scene. The plan she had formed was a failure, and she must try some other scheme.

One thing she had gained, however, she knew the kind of woman she had to deal with; she was not plotting and planning solely in the dark, and she was preparing herself to give one parting shot when the door of the studio opened, and, without being announced, in walked Lord Olive.

"How do you do, Clytie? I was told you were alone," he said, coming forward, yet with a doubtful glance at the stranger.

All at once, with a great start of surprise, he recognised her, exclaiming:

"Aunt Caroline, is it possible?"

"Quite possible," was the wiled reply, "though I might be equally surprised to meet you here. Good morning, Miss Cranbourne," and so saying, she disappeared, leaving a woman swamped out of the studio, followed by the young nobleman.

"Let me see you into your carriage, aunt," he said.

But she waved him back imperiously, saying: "No, I don't want you; go and make as great a fool of yourself as her father did."

And the next instant she was gone.

CHAPTER XIII.

JEM ON THE SCENE.

When Lord Olive returned to the studio, Clytie's attitude was changed.

Defiance no longer gleamed out of her beautiful face, her palette and brushes had fallen from her hands, all her spirit and energy seemed to have fled, and she leaned back in a wholly collapsed and half-fainting condition in the chair which her visitor had just vacated.

The fatigue and exhaustion of many hours' hard work, and the subsequent exciting scene had utterly unerved her.

Miss Burlington had gone, so also, she thought, had Lord Olive, and then her spirit and strength had given way, and she almost lay in the arm chair nerveless and requiring but a very little extra excitement to make her hysterical.

Here was a dilemma for the young nobleman to be in. Miss Burlington's words were ringing in his ears, advising him to make as great a fool of himself as

Clytie's father had been, and the temptation to do so, if it were folly, was there before him.

We are singular beings, apt to covet things apparently beyond our reach, and equally ready to decline to grasp the prize when it stands waiting before us.

So it was with Lord Olive; for weeks, almost months, he had been waiting for an opportunity like the present, and now it had come; with his aunt's ironical advice ringing in his ears, he refrained from availing himself of it.

Still he must say or do something, if only he could keep himself from saying too much; so he stepped forward, in some alarm, it is true, asking:

"Clytie, are you ill? What is the matter with you?"

"Oh, I didn't know you were here," said the girl, raising herself with an effort. "I am a little over-worked, and that woman has worried me a great deal. There is some wine in that cupboard, if you will give me a glass or two, I shall soon be better."

Lord Olive got the wine quickly, tenderly held a glass to her lips, and with difficulty controlled the inclination to take the fair head, lay it on his breast, and exclaim that it might always be her refuge and cooling place.

But he did not do so; a doubt of himself or of her, he scarcely knew which, held him back till the opportunity was gone, to be regretted afterwards, when regrets were unavailing and vain.

In a few seconds Clytie had sufficiently recovered and regained her self-possession, to be able to sit up and talk, if not with as much vivacity as usual, at least calmly and quietly.

"I am rather tired to-day," she observed, apologetically, "and I feel like a clock that has suddenly gone down. I suppose you have heard nothing new about Charles?"

"No, nothing," was the reply; "indeed," he went on, "I am beginning to lose hope. The naturalist I told you of, whose name is Gordon, was last heard of from Peru; but he was travelling alone; so to whether he really went out in the *Clarinda* or not appears doubtful, and I cannot learn anything definite about Charles."

"Poor boy," sighed the girl; "it seems as if he was literally sold to his death. But I have no more tears left to weep for him, I can only hope and pray that he is alive and will return."

"I came in to tell you that the earl, your grandfather, has been very ill, but I suppose my aunt has forestalled me; I thought perhaps he had sent for and would like to see you."

"Oh, no," and then Clytie told her cousin the purport, so far as she could judge, of Miss Burlington's visit and conversation.

"It's a pity you and Aunt Caroline cannot get on together, or be better friends," remarked the young man, "but I suppose it can't be helped. How does the work get on?" he asked, turning to examine the paintings. "Ah, you have not much more to do, I see, before your picture and mine will both be finished. I hope they will be well hung in the Academy."

"And I hope they may only be admitted," smiled Clytie, languidly; "as for your picture, as you call it, I think it is really the best of the two; I shall feel rather provoked if 'Anora Leigh' is accepted, and 'Sold to his Death' refused. Another week's work, however, and I think I shall have finished."

"Have you seen much of the Marquis de Santó lately," inquired her cousin, abruptly.

"No, I declined the commission he gave me. He wanted it as a particular time, and was rather a nuisance, so I wrote and told him that I could not do it by the time specified, but mentioned another artist who would. Since then I have heard nothing of him."

"I am glad of it, I don't like him, and indeed I don't like your following a profession that exposes you to being patronised by such men, but you knew that long ago, Clytie, and my wishes don't seem to influence you much."

Clytie looked for a moment at her cousin and unacknowledged lover, doubtfully.

"What right had he to talk to her like this?" was the question that naturally rose to her mind, but she did not give utterance to it.

Lord Olive was treading on dangerous ground; such a question would bring him still further on to it, and Clytie, while also longed for, at the same time rather dreaded an avowal of his love for her.

Happy as such a declaration would make her, she yet felt it would be wiser to postpone it until her position, whatever it might be, in regard to the Denborough title and estates, was settled, and this, while her grandfather was living, or unfriendly towards her, could not be.

So, instead of helping her companion on to the slippery ground, she rather warded him off, by observing:

"It is rather late in the day to find fault with me upon such a subject, Victor. You know poor papa always took great pleasure in teaching me, and after mamma's death, I had no other resource. I have been wonderfully successful, too; grief and necessity seem to have given me both industry and talent, such as I should never have otherwise possessed. There are drawbacks in everything, and of course my profession is no exception."

"It is all very well, but you could have painted as much as you liked as an amateur, if you had only accepted my mother's offer of a home. I can't imagine why you will be so unconformably independent."

"Can't you, Victor; to me it seems simple enough. Your mother never saw me, never took the trouble to see me—remember, I am not complaining—but she wrote, urged by you, I am sure, to offer me a home, and I am 'willy grand,' cousin. I could not forget many things and all my mother by father's relations, and I would have assumed far more than I have done rather than be under obligation to any of them."

"You include me among the number," asked her cousin, in a hasty tone.

"No, indeed, Victor, you know I do not," she replied, eagerly, laying her hand on his. "What should I have done since Charles went away without you?"

The look that accompanied this was far more eloquent than words.

Lord Olive impulsively raised the hand he held to his lips, and the crisis so long avoided by both was at hand, when the door opened, and Totts with her usual want of ceremony came on the scene.

"Please, Miss Clytie, the missus's compliments and would you like to go with her to the theatre to-night. That blanket that came to you have sent her a box, and she'll be happy to take you with her."

"Thank you, I don't care to go to-night, but I will see her before she goes," and Totts with this answer withdrew, forming in her own mind a pretty accurate idea of the scene she had just interrupted.

"Wot a precious idiot you was, Totts," she muttered to herself, as she closed the door upon the cousins. "What a pretty thing you've been and gone and spoilt, but never mind, they'll soon be right in the end. The course of true love never did run smooth, I've been told, and if it does, one ought to put some pebbles in the way just to make it ripple a bit, and that's what I've done, but it will all come right at last," with which comforting conclusion Totts sought the presence of her mistress.

Meanwhile Miss Burlington had left the Clubfoot mansion, walking down the street in which it was situated with a quick, impatient step, looking neither to the right nor left, and without the most remote suspicion of being followed.

This is what really happened, however:

For several days past the Clubfoot house had been watched, though all the inmates of it were perfectly unconscious of the fact.

An undisciplined youth of some eighteen or twenty, with a wry neck, and a face like a rat, had lingered away many precious or idle hours in smoking, short pipe, walking or leaning listlessly about and keeping his keen, sharp eyes fixed upon all who entered or came out of this particular house.

Not that he was constantly there, indeed, how could he be so, when he made a point of following anyone that in any way excited his curiosity?

Thus Lord Olive had been followed to his club and private residence, and his name had been inquired; others, not always with such a satisfactory result, had likewise been looked after, but without anything of moment being discovered, and Jem Curtis was beginning to think the work exceedingly unprofitable, when seeing a middle-aged lady knock and ring at the house in question, he lounged past just as the door opened, and thus heard her inquirers for Miss Cranbourne.

He noticed that Totts hesitated, and finally closed the door, and he determined to wait until the strange lady came out again, and follow her.

She was a stranger he knew, by the manner in which Totts received her, and also the reason in not giving her name, and so Jem lounged against the lamp-post, and smoked his pipe, as though life held neither cares nor duties for him, until he saw Miss Burlington, evidently in no improved temper, emerge from the house.

To stroll along after her was no difficult task, but, she had not gone a hundred yards, before, hailing a passing cab, she got into it.

"Great Northern Hotel," he heard her say to the driver, and then she went off, while Jem stood looking blankly at the rapidly disappearing vehicle.

There he stood, undecided what to do; his

instinct, rather than his reason, seemed to warn him that this was a place that might inspire him greatly, and here he was, allowing it to escape.

"It'll be three bob at the least," he muttered, uneasily, "but it's soon got, and I'll find out anything without spending time; so here goes," and he called a hansom, much to the driver's astonishment, and told the man where to drive him.

The cabman hesitated, for Jen's coat was good, and the most fashionable out, but the young man, guessing at his suspicion, said:

"The fare's two bob and a tanner, here's three bob, and the sooner you get over the ground you'll please me and yourself too."

Satisfied on this point, the man took the money, whipped up his horse, and had reached King's Cross a full quarter of an hour before the four-wheeler, in which Miss Burlington was travelling, pulled up at the door of the hotel.

So far Jen had succeeded, but what after all was the use of his success?

If he asked one of the hall porters or made inquiries in the hotel as to the name of this middle-aged lady, her object in calling on Clytie, and where she lived, was it not more than probable that he would be turned out of the place, perhaps, even handed over to the charge of the police, therefore Jen was in a dilemma.

Standing on the kerbstone, wondering what he could do, Jen got in the way of the foot-passengers, and almost upset one gentleman who was hurrying to the direction of the railway station.

A few oaths in French followed this collision, and Jen looked up to recognize the marquise who had taken a walk with his brother's wife in Hyde Park, and in whose employment, managed principally through Iona Curtis, he now was.

"Ah, just the one I want," he said, ignoring the Frenchman's oaths, and then as rapidly as he could he stated the cause of his being there, and the fix he was in.

"And you want me to inquire at the hotel," observed the foreigner; "yes, I see, but I have very little time; describe her."

"Why, there she is," exclaimed Jen, whose eyes had scarcely left the door of the hotel. "She's going away too, don't you see the porter's carrying her bag? Perhaps I can find out now, myself, sir."

"Very well, don't know me," said the Frenchman, walked on, keeping close behind the object of Jen's anxiety and curiosity.

There was no label or direction on the bag the porter carried, but something in the air and manner, rather than the features of the lady, reminded the marquise of Edward Cranbourne, and he determined, at any personal inconvenience, to ascertain something about her.

The lady went up to the booking office, and the marquise closely followed her.

"Single to Newcastle," he heard her say to the clerk, in asking for a ticket.

"Newcastle?" was not that near to Denbrough Castle? such was the thought which flashed through the Frenchman's brain.

This lady, for lady she evidently was, had been to see Clytie Cranbourne, so Iona Curtis had told him, she was now off to the north, having either come from Denbrough Castle, or was going to it on some mission.

Whatever it was, the wily schemer thought it was necessary that he should know, and he rapidly came to a conclusion as to what he would do.

He was due at a dinner party, then he intended to have looked into the theatre for which he had sent a private box to Mrs. Clubfoot.

The dinner was important, but it would have to be foregone. He had just time to send a telegram, take his ticket, and jump into the same carriage in which Miss Burlington and another lady and gentleman had settled themselves, before the train started out of the station.

"This is a run go!" muttered Jen, who, unobserved, had watched the whole of this performance.

"I think I've had hunting enough for one day," he continued, "so I'll just go home and tell Iona." To his surprise, Mrs. Curtis was not quite as pleased on hearing his account as she might have been expected to be.

"We must look out," she muttered, with subdued fierceness, "or we shall burn our paws in picking out the chestnuts, and the monkey will eat them."

"Ah, that's what's meant by a cat's paw, isn't it?" asked the youth with an expression of cunning; "but what an idiot the cat was; she'd good claws hadn't she?"

"We have at any rate, and if need be will use them," returned the woman, savagely.

"All right, so we will; but now give me some supper, for I'm jolly peckish."

Iona Curtis complied, and then sat down to brood over the possible change in or failure of her scheme; while her old acquaintance, the Marquis de Saint, was travelling northwards at the rate of forty miles an hour with Caroline Burlington as his vis-à-vis.

CHAPTER XIV.

CLYTIE IS TELEGRAPHED FOR.

ANOTHER fortnight has passed. How Clytie had worked during that time, the lay figure in her studio, the casts and paintings, and her over-taxed nerves alone could tell.

But the task over which she had laboured was finished.

"Aurora Leigh" and "Sold to His Death" had received the last touch; the frames were upon the paintings, they would be sent off to stand their chance in the lottery of life that very morning, and Clytie was suffering from rather than enjoying that singular feeling which invariably accompanies completion of any great labour, be it successful or otherwise.

The sensation of having lost something, of having nothing to do, is though consciousness, and even the very functions of life, such as breathing or thinking, were for the time suspended.

The severe strain of working against time and circumstance was taken from her, and figuratively speaking, she seemed as though she would shake or fall to pieces if some counter excitement were not immediately provided for her.

Everyone who has gone through an ordeal of work or suffering will recognise or remember the sensation when the reaction once set in.

A goodly number of pictures left the Clubfoot mansion for Burlington House that day.

James Clubfoot sent three, his sister one, and Clytie Cranbourne two; the question now asked with breathless interest, was, "Would any or all of them be hung?"

It was a question time alone could solve, and Clytie refused to speculate upon it, but after admiring the productions of her friends, submitted her own work to their criticism, and having seen the pictures carried off to the room that was to take them, she looked at the empty space left on the walls, and wondered if she should ever do anything so ambitious and so thoroughly in earnest again.

Then the Earl of Denbrough's granddaughter went up to her own room, threw herself upon the bed, and from sheer nervous and mental exhaustion fell asleep.

Daylight was drawing to a close, and the shadows were long, though the summer was still far ahead, when Clytie woke from her dreamless sleep, to find Psyche Clubfoot standing by the bedside, with one of those peculiarly brick-red envelopes in her hand, which the telegraph office are in the habit of using.

"I thought it must be important, or I should not have woke you," said Miss Clubfoot, by way of apology. "You don't often receive telegrams."

"Oh, thank you. Don't go away, Psyche; what time is it?"

"Six o'clock; dinner time; but James and me are both out, they won't be home till late, and as you seemed as though you wouldn't wake till morning, I was going to have high tea instead of dinner; now you are awake, we'll alter it, if you like."

"No, I'll have the same as you. But read this, I don't seem to be quite awake; what does it say?"

Psyche Clubfoot took the paper in her hands, and read as follows:

"Denbrough Castle; E. Cranbourne to Miss C. Cranbourne—"

"Your grandfather is seriously ill, and wishes to see you. Start by the 8.40 train, this evening; some one shall be sent to meet you at Newcastle."

That was all; the summons had come at last, just as her work was done, and she was ready to meet it.

So Clytie thought, and then—it might be that her recent overwork had left its exhausting effect upon her nerves—she seemed to shrink from taking this long journey alone.

"I suppose you wouldn't like to go with me, Psyche?" she asked, doubtfully. "I don't feel equal to going alone."

"Oh, yes, I'll go with you," replied Miss Clubfoot, who, whatever her faults might be, was a very kind-hearted and good-natured girl, always ready to inconvenience herself for the sake of other people.

"I don't suppose mamma will mind," she added, as a kind of afterthought. "It's a great nuisance James is not at home. He could have seen us off or gone with us, and I don't know if there is any money in the house."

"Oh, I have plenty," said Clytie, "you know I don't keep a banking account and, of course, I shall

pay everything if you are kind enough to go with me. Let me see, the train starts from King's Cross at 8.40, and it is now six; we shall have plenty of time to have our tea and pack. I shall only take a second dress with me, and a change of linen."

"Then I suppose I had better do the same," observed Psyche, "though I expect we shall surely need more than just a change of dress, and it will be very awkward having nothing to wear."

"Yes, but we can buy what we want anywhere, you know, and it's a great bother having a quantity of luggage; I like just as much as I can carry in a bag, it saves being troubled with a railway porter, and if my grandfather is dying, as I fear, we shall have no time or care to think of dress."

So the two girls went down to their "high tea," and then packed up what they thought they required, with the assistance of Totie, and sent for a cab to convey them to the railway station.

Just as they were about to start, Psyche remembered that her mother might be surprised at her absence, and she made an observation to that effect to Clytie.

"Oh, yes," said the latter, "I am glad you reminded me, we will leave the telegram I received behind us, and you scribble a few words, telling your mother you have gone with me, that will satisfy her. But be quick, the cab is at the door."

So this was done, and Mrs. Clubfoot and her son found the telegram and Psyche's pencilled scrawl on their return, instead of the two girls they had left a few hours earlier.

"Rather sudden," observed James Clubfoot, in a tone of discontent, almost of displeasure. "I don't like the idea of those two girls travelling alone. I wish I had been at home, to go with them."

"I don't think that at all necessary," replied his mother, "surely those two could go anywhere together; at any rate it is better for two to have gone than one. We need not trouble ourselves about them. Psyche says in her note that she will write to us tomorrow."

"Yes, I know she does, but if anything should happen to them?" hesitated the young man.

"Nonsense, what should happen to them?" returned the lady. "Both of the girls have got tongues in their heads, and can take care of themselves. I am glad Psyche is gone too, it seems as though Clytie didn't mean to drop us when she comes into her fortune. It will be a capital thing for Psyche to be invited to stay at Denbrough Castle half her time. She can't fail to make a good match if Clytie takes her by the hand."

"I suppose not, and Clytie herself will be utterly lost to us," observed her son, gloomily.

"I don't know that, James," was the hopeful reply, "though, at the same time, I must say, I think it rather means on your part to think she will marry you. I did hope it once, but then I thought her cousin, Lord Clive, admired Psyche; but it was a mistake, and you will see Clytie and he will marry each other."

Her son made no reply, but walked out of the room, and perhaps it was well that he did his face from his mother, or she might have been shocked at the contortions of swift and violent passion that swept over it.

Externally, James Clubfoot was a very mild, gentle looking man, with a certain abstracted dreaminess about him, that but ill accorded with his fiery coloured hair and brown eyes.

But under that calm, placid surface, raged some of the fiercest and deadliest passions that the human heart could give refuge to.

Passions, that in a lifetime might not be stirred; that their owner might be ignorant almost of the possession of, but which, once making their presence known, once gaining the mastery of the man, would lead him on, past all hominities and obstacles, to the commission of any crime, in the furtherance of the one idea that absorbed him.

Such was James Clubfoot, untried by those around him, scarcely known even to himself.

Left alone, with no rival in the field, no disturbing influence to excite him, and he might have been content to go on loving Clytie from a distance for ever.

But a rival made all the difference; the very thought that another hand would grasp the treasure he might never hope to touch, set both his heart and brain on fire, made him scarcely responsible for his actions, and mad enough for anything.

The next day Mrs. Clubfoot rather expected a telegram from the two girls, stating their safe arrival at Denbrough Castle, but none came.

However girls were thoughtless, there was sure to be a letter from Psyche the next morning, so there was no need to trouble himself.

Next morning, however, the post was very late, and when at last it did come, there was no letter from either of the girls; only one with Lord Clive's crest upon it for Clytie.

Mrs. Clubfoot could not understand it.

Psyche would have writhen if she could, she was sure, and she tried to make all kinds of excuses to account for the delay.

Through every hour of that day news was expected, but none came, and Mrs. Clubfoot was getting more seriously alarmed than she cared to admit.

It might only have been a little neglect or carelessness after all, however, and so she determined to wait as patiently as she could till the next morning.

Again, however, the postman came round without bringing the expected missive. Four days ago they had started off suddenly for the north; further suspense was unbearable, and James Clubfoot, now nearly as anxious as his mother, sent off a telegram to Clytie at the Castle.

This was in the morning; no answer had come by the afternoon, and then he sent off another, this time addressed to his sister, and requesting her to telegraph a reply at once.

No answer to this.

Something must be done, there was mischief of some kind somewhere; and he decided he would wait till the morning, give the post one more chance, and if no letter came he would telegraph to the Earl of Denborough, and if nothing satisfactory was the result of that, would start for the north himself by the 8.40 train on the following evening.

The demon of jealousy had more than once suggested to James Clubfoot, that Lord Clive must have something to do with the absence and silence of the two girls, and, when this, the fourth day, came to a close, he determined to go and call on the young nobleman.

Inquiries at his club and at his chambers in the Albany both resulted in the same reply. Lord Clive had been out of town for three or four days; at the latter place, however, he learnt that his lordship was expected back the same evening.

Clubfoot left his card, with the request that he would call upon him, and once more returned home.

Poor Mrs. Clubfoot was in a dreadful state of anxiety, and would, had not her son detained her, have started for Denborough Castle that very night.

I am afraid very little sleep visited James Clubfoot or his mother that night; and even poor little Totts wandered about the passages, staircases, and empty rooms, feeling as though some terrible misfortune had occurred to cause this desolation.

No news again the next morning, and breakfast at the Clubfoots was a pretence rather than a reality, and James had already sent off a long telegram to the earl and paid for a return message.

Scarcely was breakfast—at which neither mother nor son could eat anything—over than a hansom cab drove up to the door, Lord Clive jumped out, and in a few seconds was before them.

"I only got your message late last night," he observed to the artist, "and I thought it must be something rather important; but where is my cousin, Miss Cranbourne?" and he looked at the table, which had evidently only been laid for two.

"Don't you know?" asked Mr. Clubfoot, suspiciously.

"Don't I know what? I have been out of town the whole week, and have not had a line from Clytie, though I wrote to ask her a question."

"Yes, there is a letter for Miss Clytie," said Mrs. Clubfoot; "perhaps it's the one you sent, but of course she hasn't had it, because she isn't here."

"Not here, where is she? Why do you keep me in suspense?" he asked impatiently.

James, who enjoyed his anxiety, would have kept him waiting still longer; but his mother, who had no ill-will towards the young nobleman, told him in a few words all that had happened and the cause of their anxiety.

"There is something wrong here," said Clive moodily, as he restlessly paced up and down the breakfast-room. "Edward Cranbourne was not at Denborough Castle on Monday, the day that telegram was sent; and more than that, the earl, who has been very ill, is now much better. There is something black in this which I cannot fathom."

At that moment Totts entered with a telegram; it was from the Earl of Denborough, in answer to the one sent two hours before, and ran as follows:

"The Earl of Denborough does not know Mr. Clubfoot, nor anything about the two ladies he inquires for. If one of them is, as stated, Miss Clytie Cranbourne, she will be welcome at the Castle; indeed, she is earnestly requested to come."

"There, what do you think of that?" asked James Clubfoot, as, read the message aloud, then handed the paper to his visitor.

"I think there is some villany in it," was the excited reply; "I shall go and see Edward Cranbourne at once, and perhaps, start for the north to-night; at any rate, you shall hear from me, Mrs. Clubfoot, the moment I have any news. You must be dreadfully anxious about your daughter."

"I am anxious about both of the girls," was the reply, "and I'm only glad they are together."

"Yes, that is the only comfort in the whole affair, you shall hear from me directly I have news. Good morning!" and squeezing the good lady's hand, he was gone, forgetting in his haste to take any notice of the artist himself.

James Clubfoot made no comment, though his face flushed a deep red, he put on his hat, called a cab, and drove down to Scotland Yard, to take counsel with the police.

(To be continued.)

THE HAUNTED CHAMBER.

A ROOM in the principal inn of a country town had the reputation of being haunted. Nobody would sleep in it, and it was therefore shut up; but it so happened that at an election the inn was quite full, and there was only the haunted room unoccupied. A gentleman's gamekeeper came to the inn, exceedingly fatigued by a long journey, and wanted a bed. He was informed that unless he chose to occupy the haunted room he must seek a bed elsewhere.

"Haunted!" exclaimed he; "stuff and nonsense! I'll sleep in it! Ghost or demon, I'll take a look at what haunts it."

Accordingly, after fortifying himself with a pipe and tankard, he took up his quarters in the haunted chamber and retired to rest. He had not laid down many minutes when the bed shook under him most fearfully.

He sprang out of bed, struck a light (for he had taken the precaution to place a box of lucifer matches by his bedside), and made a careful examination of the roof, but could discover nothing.

The courageous fellow would not return to bed; but remained watching for some time. Presently he saw the bed shake violently; the floor was firm; nothing moved but the bed.

Determined, if possible, to find out the cause of his bed quake, he looked in the bed, and near the bed, and not seeing anything to account for the shaking, which every now and then seemed to seize on the bed, he at last pulled it from the wall. Then the "murder came out."

The sign board of the inn was fastened to the outer wall by a nut and screw, which came through to the back of the bed, and when the wind swung the sign board to and fro the movement was communicated to the bed, causing it to shake in a violent manner.

The gamekeeper, delighted at having hunted up the ghost, informed the landlord next morning of the real nature of his unearthly visitor, and was handsomely rewarded for rendering a room, hitherto useless, now quite serviceable.

All the ghost stories on record might no doubt have been traced to similar sources, if those to whom the "ghosts" appeared had been as "plucky" as our gamekeeper.

WEDDINGS IN AUTUMN.

It cannot have escaped observation that more weddings "come off" in autumn than in any other season of the year.

The cause of this, many think, is the love-making that takes place during a summer ruralising.

The sweet influences of nature open the heart to sentiment; engagements are made in the charming retreats, where the summer hours have glided by—and the wonder has been:

How lightly falls the foot of Time,
That only treads on flowers.

Or if the lover defers the declaration, it is made when the parties are at home again; and the happy day is fixed, with as little delay as possible.

A "reception" assembles the friends to congratulate the wedded pair, and perchance they set out on a short tour, returning with the first frost, to commence life in the city.

This month several "joyful occasions" are already impending.

This fact certainly shows the advantages of a country recreation.

The Scotch disliked the merry month of May for bridal, on account of the associations derived from the fatal results of Queen Mary's marriage with Darnley.

In this locality the May reminiscences might be of a winter of dissipation, late hours of extravagance—not particularly favourable to matrimonial speculations.

It is worth the while for young ladies who desire to be settled in life to reflect on the matter.

THE ACCLIMATISATION OF USEFUL PLANTS IN INDIA.

SINCE the establishment of the cinchonas in India, in which Dr. King took an active part, the Royal Botanical Gardens at Calcutta have been the centre from which has been distributed other useful plants. Thus, following upon the cinchonas came the ipecacuanha, a very limited number of plants being first sent from this country for propagation at the Calcutta gardens, and subsequent distribution in the plantations, and succeeding the ipecacuanha have been other plants of commercial value, so that the annual reports on the progress of the Royal Botanical Gardens have of late years contained much interesting matter on all important subject of acclimatisation.

The present report is dated in June last, and shows what has been done in the above respect as well as in the gardens generally during the year 1875-76.

As is well-known, the introduction of caoutchouc, or rubber yielding plants into India, has attracted much attention of late, and has been brought prominently before the members of the Society of Arts; following upon this, the recent despatch from the Royal Gardens at Kew of a large number of warden cases, filled with young plants of the Para rubber (*Hevea brasiliensis*) which had been raised from seed at Kew, and which were consigned to India, gave indications that ere long we should hear of well-stocked rubber plantations.

Suitable sites will have to be carefully selected for these plants, for Dr. King thinks it is only in certain parts of India that the plants will succeed at all, as will be gathered from what he says on the subject of india-rubber generally, which is as follows:

"During the current year it has become more apparent than ever that neither the *Hevea* nor the Madagascar rubber plant can be grown for commercial purposes in the climate of Bengal. Both have alike failed in this garden and in the warm tropical valleys of the Sikkim Himalayas, and in my opinion a home will not be found for them further north than Tenasserim, Ceylon or perhaps Malabar. The appliances in this garden probably render it the most suitable place in India for raising seedlings of these plants for transport to places possessing a suitable climate for their growth to maturity."

SUPERSTITIONS.

A MAN riding on a piebald horse is supposed to have the power to cure whooping-cough, if whatever he prescribes is done to the patient.

It is not supposed that he has any superior medical knowledge, or that what he prescribes would have any virtue except from its coming from a man sitting on a piebald horse.

Accordingly a man who used, when asked, to reply in derision, "Tie a rope round the child's neck," was strictly obeyed, and the rope tied accordingly.

A like superstition prevails respecting a seventh son without any daughters intervening; and still more a seventh son of a seventh son.

Such an one is supposed to have the power of healing all diseases, not as possessing any superior medical skill, but by a certain magical efficacy. And one when an infant has been made to stroke with its little hands the face of a sick man, as producing an infallible cure.

The touch of a hanged man's hand is very generally esteemed a cure for a wen.

It is probable that this, and also the royal touch for scrofula, have sometimes really had an effect; because a very feeling of awe or of horror is known to act sometimes on the absorbents.

As a preservative against cramp, what is called the cramp-bone of a leg of mutton (that is the patella or knee-cap), worn about the person, has long been in repute.

Another preservative which an old woman has been known to prescribe, is to lay your shoes upside down at the bedroom door.

There is a curious remedy in high repute for a rupture in an infant.

An opening is made, by means of wedges, through the middle of the stem of a young tree, and the infant is passed a certain number of times to and fro, through the opening; the tree is then carefully bandaged, and if its wound heals, the child will recover.

THE DIAMOND BRACELET.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

LORD TREGARON, sharing the anxiety and excitement of Sinda and her lover, had given orders that Mrs. Biggs should be ushered into the drawing room immediately upon her arrival at Belle Isle. Accordingly, the announcement of her name by the liveried servant was closely followed by her entrance into Lord Tregaron's presence.

The soft, mellow radiance of the many wax lights temporarily confused or blinded her vision, and she halted just within the door and stared about the long and lofty apartment, with its pale yellow satin upholstery, its luxurious furniture, statuary, and objects of art, and finally her gaze rested upon the inmates of the room.

The earl, grand and stately, with his stern, dark eyes and bushy white moustache, looking the military officer to perfection, stood nearest the door. Beyond and near him was Wolsey Bathurst, his heavy features wearing an eager expression, his small eyes gleaming like polished beads.

In a low marquise chair sat Sinda, her billows of white drapery flowing around her, her lovely gold hair, utterly colourless, her blue-gray eyes, dusky and startled, turned towards the new comer. Armand Elliot, presenting a perfect contrast to her with his olive skin and black hair, stood beside her in a protecting attitude.

Maya had disappeared unnoticed into the recess of a great bay window, and was peeping out upon the scene between the massive folds of the yellow satin and white lace curtains. Only her eyes could be seen; but these were sharp and furtive and anxious, with a strange, cunning gleam in their shallowness.

If Mrs. Biggs stared at the room and its visible occupants with an uncontrollable wonder and curiosity, she was in turn regarded with a curiosity not less keen and attentive.

She was a middle-aged woman, of vulgar aspect, red of visage, coarse and stout, a short, big, florid creature, of the lowest class, and her ignorance and ill-breeding were apparent in every feature, as well as in her awkward attitude and gait. Her flabby, over-hanging cheeks were deeply crimson in hue, showing unlimited indulgence in beer and spirituous drinks. Her nose was red and bulbous. Her small eyes were full of animal cunning.

Her heavy, red chin was covered with an eruption of yet more vividly red colour.

She was dressed in a dingy black alpaca gown, and a shabby black shawl was drawn about her shoulders.

A big black bonnet covered her head, and a bunch of roses rested upon her hair, which was hay-coloured, and seemed to be gathered into a little hard knot at the nape of her thick, short neck.

Altogether Mrs. Biggs was a most unprepossessing person, not more repulsive than many of her hard-worked, ill-nourished, ignorant fellows, but still a person to be kept at a distance by anyone of refinement.

As Sinda regarded the woman's vulgar exterior her heart sank within her.

But upon the instant her courage revived. Surely, it was as Armand Elliot had said.

This woman must have been her nurse, and not her mother.

Mrs. Biggs made a very low courtesy to each of the visible inmates of the drawing-room in turn. The earl advanced a few paces and placed a chair for her, courteously inviting her to be seated.

Mrs. Biggs made another sweeping courtesy, deposited her bulky figure upon the edge of the chair, and passed one big, red hand, covered midway by a black cotton glove, over her perspiring countenance.

"You are Mrs. Rhoda Biggs?" said Lord Tregaron, interrogatively, with a suspicion that the woman might prove to be an impostor.

"Yes, sir," was the half-defiant response, "I am Mrs. Rhoda Biggs. I came here on account of an advertisement into the 'Telegraph' newspaper, as came around my butter, sir, from the grocer's. I went to see the lawyer, which he sent me here, sir, to see Lord Tregaron."

"I am Lord Tregaron."

The woman arose and made a series of courtesies more awkward and more elaborate than before. She regarded the earl in great awe, evidently with a conviction that a lord must be a being of superior clay.

"Resume your seat, madam," said the earl.

"Before entering upon the reasons of your summons here, I must be perfectly assured that you are the person of whom I am in search. There may be a mistake of identity. You were at the station at Sawnpot in 1857."

"Yes, my lud, with her Majesty's regiment which was stationed there, my lud, which my pore husband, Jacob Thomas Biggs, as was his name, was a private soldier, and a handsome man as ever I see saving your ludship's presence, and the presence of your washups," and she bobbed a little courtesy to Elliot and to Wolsey Bathurst.

"Is your husband still living, madam?" asked Lord Tregaron.

"No, my lud. He was massacred by them Sepoys!"

Mrs. Biggs put a red-flowered cotton pocket-handkerchief to her face.

"He was cut down in his youthful prime, my lud, and I have been for thirteen years his mournin' widow. Oh, my lud, them as has lost their partners alone knows the grief of them that has lost a partner. My husband wor a good purvider, although given to drink, if I do say it, but his worst enemy would have been obliged to own that Jacob Thomas Biggs, my lud, could drink more spirits and keep sober than any other man in his company. He was that cool-headed, my lud, a fine man, saving your presence, sir, and a great loss to me!"

Sinda shrank back in her chair, unable to stifle her sentiment of disgust.

She was quite convinced now that this woman had been merely her nurse, and was eager to put the inquiry point-blank, but the earl preferred to approach the subject more cautiously.

"You are a widow, then," said the earl. "How did you effect your escape? The massacre at Sawnpot was reported to have been very great."

"It was—k—was—my lud!" exclaimed Mrs. Biggs, with another application of the handkerchief to her face, even while she left one eye free to contemplate the beauty and attire of Sinda. "The massacre was puffed so frightful, my lud. My man he was killed. Women and children were cut down like wheat. And the soldiers—oh, my lud, them poor fellers, in their scarlet coats, were just shot down and cut down frightful. I didn't see the whole fight. When the Sepoys came a pouring into the fort, my lud, and a tumbling into the barracks, I forgot everything but myself. Self-preservation is the first law of nature, the good book says. And I never think of nothin', not of my own lodgings, not of my own belongin', not of them as was waitin' for me, but when I see Missus Skillers, as was my friend, killed within ten feet of me by a Sepoy fend, then I risk for dear life. And without knowing, my lud, where I was going in my fright, I ran to a cistern in the court-yard, pulled off the cover, and plumped down into four feet of water."

"Out of the frying-pan into the fire!" observed Wolsey Bathurst.

"You may well say that, your washup," said Mrs. Biggs. "I scrunched there in the water, and somebody put the cover on the cistern, and a battle went on above, my lud, and once a Sepoy, with eyes like spears, came peeping in upon me, but the cistern was full of darkness by that time, and he didn't see me. But them eyes! I shall never forget 'em while I live!" and the woman shuddered. "I had a narrow escape that time. And my teeth chattered, and I had a chill, and I was afraid I should cough, my lud, and then all would have been up with me! Four mortal hours I stayed in that cistern. The night came on, and them Sepoys raised Cain, a howlin' and a yellin' like mad. My lege, savin' your presence, miss, got so weak I couldn't stand up any longer. I'd got to drown. I says to myself, I must perish, when I hears an English bugle afar off. The Sepoys hears it, too, and they takes to their heels and escape just as an English regiment comes marching in. And then, when I knowed all was safe, I screeched like mad, and drew a crowd around the cistern, and was discovered and was drawn out, and I fainted away, my lud, like a born lady!"

She wiped her forehead assiduously, and presently continued:

"I had the rheumatics after that, and have had 'em, more or less, ever since. For weeks, my lud, I laid on a bed of pain, and when I got well, finding myself alone in the world, I went to Calcutta and took service with a lady coming to England. And here I have been ever since."

"You have proofs of your identity, madam?"

"Oh, yes, my lud. Here's a letter from the matron of the workus where I was last winter, your ludship, being obliged to go through the rheumatics. And here's a letter from the parish clergyman, as he know'd me through my having washed for his good lady, my lud, when the rheumatics were not bad. And here's a letter from the doctor at the 'spital, as

tended me the winter after I came back to England and two winters since. And here's a copy of my certificate of baptism, my lud, and here's my marriage lines."

She exhibited all these documents with great particularity, and Lord Tregaron examined them closely. Her proofs of identity were certainly strong and complete.

This woman, from a workhouse, was without any question whatever the woman of whom Sinda was in search—the Rhoda Biggs whom she had deemed it possible might be her mother.

Not one of the visible occupants of that room but deemed that possibility now of the very faintest and vaguest description.

No greater contrast than that presented by these two persons, Sinda and Mrs. Biggs, could have been imagined. The one slim as a reed, graceful as a willow, the other stout, coarse, and awkward, with a waddling gait. The one beautiful, with a rare poetic beauty, which time could not dim; the other repulsive, with bleary eyes, with the look of one addicted to the use of spirituous drinks. The one high-bred, with a girlish majesty, a haughty sweetness, an exquisite gentleness of manner; the other assertive, rude, ignorant, the very type of a Billingsgate fishwoman. That one should be the daughter of the other seemed utterly incredible.

"She has been in a workhouse," said Bathurst, in a whisper intended for Sinda's ear. "I would not take her word under oath."

Lord Tregaron desired to approach the momentous question bearing upon Sinda's identity with due caution. He believed this woman to have been Sinda's nurse, but Mrs. Biggs had evidently degenerated since the days of probable servitude into a very disreputable person. She might choose to sell her knowledge dear. He determined to extract her knowledge from her while she was yet ignorant of his purpose.

"Is it about the pension your ludship wished to see me?" questioned Mrs. Biggs, giving vent to a portion of the curiosity that was consuming her.

"We will come to the business presently for which I have summoned you here," replied the earl. "I have a few further questions to ask you first. Your identity must be thoroughly established. Have you any relatives, madam? Have you children?"

"I am an orphan," replied Mrs. Biggs, sniffing, and rubbing her rubicund visage with her highly-coloured handkerchief—"a lone orphan, my lud. My father and mother was unbeknownst to me. To tell you the truth, my lord, I'm a fondling—"

"A what?" exclaimed Lord Tregaron.

"A fondling, my lud. The shame is thom as made me such, my lud, and not to me, an innocent babbly at the time."

The earl looked perplexed.

"She means a fondling, my lord," explained Wolsey Bathurst.

"I said so!" cried Mrs. Biggs, indignantly. "A fondling it is, and a fondling I said."

"And you have no children, madam."

"I didn't any that, my lud. I have one son," said Mrs. Biggs, "a likely young fellow as has been most unfortnit, and as I left in England with his gran', when I went out to Ingy along of the regiment. Simon Biggs is his name, and most unfortnit he's been, my lud, but a likely person for a sivation," she added, with an eye to her son's worldly advancement, "if so be you wished for a faithful, well-looking servant."

"He is your only child?"

"The only one living out of seven," sniffed Mrs. Biggs. "I have supped sorrow, my lud. I've known trouble. Thom as is high up and rich, they know nothing of the troubles of the poor. I'm a widow. I couldn't never abear to marry ag'in, after losin' my poor Jacob Thomas. And so I'm alone in the world, my lud, except my son Simon, as hasn't been so far much support to me."

"In what capacity were you employed at the station at Sawnpot?" inquired Lord Tregaron. "In the family of what officer were you employed as nurse?"

Mrs. Biggs stared.

"I wasn't nuss in no family, my lud," she declared, "I was one of the regimental washerwomen, and it was along o' that fact, I suppose, I thought of the cistern in the time of the mutiny, and plumped into it quite promiscuous and unconscious like."

"You were not a nurse?"

"No, my lud."

Sinda's heart sank within her; but she presently revived under the encouraging pressure of Elliot's hand.

"I wish to make inquiries after a little child, who was supposed to have perished in the massacre," said the earl, after a brief pause; "a little girl—"

"Why, I lost one myself," interrupted Mrs. Biggs.

"And a loss it were, my lud. As pretty a child as

ever you see in a day's journey. The Killers; they lost five in the massacre, and was killed themselves; then the Thomases was killed along of their twins, and Carter, he lost his boy, but none of them could compare with my Rhoda. Why, she looked like a little lady, and was often took for higher than she was. I never thought of her when I fled for my life, and afterwards they buried all the children afore I had a chance to see 'em, and she was buried among the rest."

There was a deep silence. Sinda's hand held Elliot's tightly. Maya peered with cunning eyes, from the folds of the curtains. Lord Tregaron looked pale and troubled.

"Did your child look like you, madam?" he asked, presently.

"She looked more like me than like her pa," asserted Mrs. Biggs. "I am light-complected; she was light complected. She had blue eyes, and mine are blue. Her hair was yellow as gold, and like floss silk—much like that young lady's there, begging her pardon, my lord."

Sinda's face was white as snow, and her great vivid eyes glowed like stars. There was something of agony in her look as she upraised those eyes to Elliot, and he whispered tenderly, but with secret misgivings—

"It will be all right, Sinda. You are not that child."

She shook her head; her lips quivered.

"How old was your daughter?" inquired the earl.

Seven year, my lord. If she'd a lived she'd a been twenty now, and much such a face and figure as that young lady, begging her ladyship's pardon. She was slim and graceful, always a dancing, and many a the pommies she plucked up from the soldiers for her little dances. And her skin was fair as a lily, my lord. She were a great pet in the barracks, a regular little actress, and Jacob and me we dressed her like a lady and jest warshuped her. And she was took from us just as if she'd a been an ordinary-looking, unsightly child. And we had telled to make money out of her when she should be growed up. She would a' made a splendid ballet dancer. Why, the colonel took notice of her once, and said that she was the very model of a gentleman's child. The other six was coarse; but she was like a lily among weeds, that she was."

"How was she dressed at the time of the massacre?" asked the earl.

"She had on a pink print gown, my lord, and a coarse straw hat with a wide brim to protect her pretty complexion, as I was so careful on, and when she went out to play I tie a handkercher around her neck so as she won't hurt her skin. I remembers the dress and the hat and the handkercher perfectly, my lord. The print had a deep print spring onto a light pink ground. The hat was trimmed with posy green, my favourite colour in them days, and the handkercher had my name, Rhoda Biggs, being her name too, writ onto it, and was tied in a knot under her chin. I seem to see her agin, my lord, as I saw her then, a little beauty as over was, my lord, and to be murdered by them Scopyes was too awful."

Another dead silence. A sense of fatiguess came upon Sinda.

The earl knew not what to say.

That Sinda was this woman's daughter seemed clearly proved.

Even Sinda herself could not long a disbelieve in Mrs. Biggs' claims upon her.

"You must be fatigued, madam," said the earl, desiring time for consultation. "I will ring for a servant to show you to your room, where you can rest and refresh yourself. After dinner I will see you again."

"No, my lord, I must know now why I was advertised for," responded Mrs. Biggs, firmly. "Has my son been a doin' anything here? Why have you asked all about my family and history? There's nothing here as I must know immediately."

She looked defiantly around from face to face, her gaze resting longest upon Sinda's pallid countenance.

"It is best that she should know," said Sinda, in a low and fluttering voice. "Please sit, my lord."

"No, no, Miss Sinda," exclaimed the earl, reproaching her, "this is madness!"

"Sinda" whispered Elliot, "take time for consideration. Do nothing rashly."

"Do not own that creature for your mother, Miss Sinda," pleaded Bathurst. "There must be mistake. I will not believe that she is your mother."

"If there is a mistake," said Sinda, more steadily, "investigation will show it. And if she be really my mother, I should scorn myself if I despised and disowned her."

"But the mere accident of birth cannot make you two friends and equals," said the earl. "Be guided

by your friends, Miss Sinda. Give the woman money if you wish, and send her away no wiser than she came."

Sinda was silent, struggling with the mighty temptations that beset her.

The woman was frightfully repulsive to her pure and fastidious nature.

She shrank from her as from something bad and unwholesome.

The woman had basely deserted her child in a moment of terror, as was proven by her own confession.

No secret tie of kinship drew Sinda to Mrs. Biggs; no secret sympathy impelled her to claim her as her mother.

Could she not send her away, as Lord Tregaron suggested, with a sum of money, and be rid of her for ever?

To own this woman as her mother, to acknowledge the "unfortunate" Simon as her brother, would be to draw upon her a pair of leeches, would be to gather about her unpleasant associations, would end Lord Tregaron's friendship for her, would make of her a social pariah.

If she accepted Mrs. Biggs as her mother, and proclaimed the relationship, she could not think further of marriage with Armand Elliot.

She knew enough of English prejudices to know that even the kindly earl, whom she had grown to love with reverent tenderness and yearning, would advise his heir not to ally himself with an acknowledged daughter of Mrs. Biggs.

Could she give up love and position, social recognition and companionship, all that made life dear to her, for the sake of a miserable old woman like this, who had abandoned her child in a supreme cowardice, leaving it to perish that she might secure her own safety?

The girl lifted her head proudly, and her lovely features were cold and haughty with her suppressed emotion. She was about to deny the woman, when suddenly her face drooped again, softening, and growing piteous and woeful.

In denying the mother that bore her, was she not proving herself a coward?

If Mrs. Biggs were her mother, would her reticence or denial alter the fact?

If a marriage with Armand Elliot were unattainable for an acknowledged daughter of Mrs. Biggs, would it not be equally unattainable for that daughter if she remained unacknowledged?

It was the Biggs blood that was unfitted to mingle with that of the proud Elliot. If Sinda were a Biggs, no lie told or noted could make her a fitting bride for Armand Elliot.

The girl had a really truthful nature. Too proud by nature to tell a lie, she was also conscientious in the extreme. Mr. Hadespeth had found noble soil in this girl for his grand principles to take root, and she was brave as she was truthful, as grand of soul as of beauty. She felt that she should lose the herself far more than she now loathed Mrs. Biggs, if she should play the part of a coward—if she should deny the mother she believed to have given her birth.

"I have decided," she said, softly. "Please tell her, my lord."

"Sinda, love, take time for reflection," urged Elliot. "Wait until morning."

But Sinda's face grew stern with her resolution. She could not falter.

"Have you reflected upon the cost of this step you would take, my poor child?" asked the earl, with a glance at Elliot.

Sinda understood this covert meaning. Her perfect features were convulsed for an instant in an expression of agony.

Then, her face growing calm, she answered:

"I have counted the cost, my lord."

"My dear child, be guided by me," urged Lord Tregaron. "I am older than you. I would not counsel you to do wrong, but I entreat you to consider this matter. The woman had no real love for her child. Why degrade yourself to her level?"

"I must do right," said Sinda. "If she is my mother, will it be right for me to deny her, to allow her to think me dead? Would it be truthful? I must not do violence to my conscience. My lord, please to read her Topee's letter."

The earl refused to obey her. He considered Sinda Quixotic and foolish.

Mrs. Biggs had witnessed the brief colloquy, but not having heard one word had no suspicion of its import.

She now demanded again to be informed why she had been summoned to Belle Isle.

No one answered her. Sinda tried to speak, but could not.

The silence was broken, the Gordian knot was cut, by Maya.

(To be Continued.)

THE PINK OF PERFECTION.

A MIDSUMMER COMEDY.

BY ALICE HARRISON.

It was Georgia McLevin who sat at the piano and merrily sang:

"The owl and the pussy-cat went to sea in a beautiful pea-green boat. They took some honey and plenty of money wrapped up in a five-pound note. The owl looked up to the moon above his head, and sang his wooing to the little pussy-cat. Oh lovely pussy! Oh pussy, my love, where are you? What a beautiful pussy you are! I have missed you! Pussy said to the owl, 'You elegant fowl! How wonderful sweet you sing! Oh let us be married, too long have we waited. But what shall we do for a ring?' They sailed away for a year and a year, to the land where the bong-tree grows; And there in a wood a piggy-back stood, With a ring in the end of his nose, his nose."

When she had finished, she whirled herself about upon the piano-stool, and clapping her hands by way of applause, said to the gay trio who formed her audience:

"That is by way of prelude to the bit of news I have to offer for your delectation. The pink of perfection has engaged to marry the China doll! Isn't that sufficiently astonishing?"

"Whatever do you mean, Georgia?" said her brother Phil. "You deal in mysteries!"

Georgia had come in from a calling tour, and finding Phil and their visitor, Ina Casew, with a caller, Miss Berthold, in the parlour, had seated herself in her street costume, at the piano, and proceeded to give vent to her overflowing spirits, as above described.

"Such an announcement!" she cried. "Nobody but you, Phil, could fall to take my meaning. I repeat it—the pink of perfection has engaged to marry the China doll."

There was some wit and a good deal of not very harmful malice in Georgia's way of phrasing her news. Miss Berthold smiled, quizzed, and said:

"Yes, I heard of it this morning. I thought it a capital arrangement. Don't you see, Mrs. McLevin, that the owl in the legend, alias the pink of perfection is none other than Frank Parkhurst?"

"Such a silly, stupid owl!" interjected Georgia. "And the piggy-back, Presumably Miss Berthold, 'the China doll,' is Grace De Vere."

"Thanks for the enlightenment," said Philip, smiling, "and now—pardon my dullness—but the piggy-back is still a mystery."

"Oh stupid!" cried Georgia. "Where are your wits? Isn't Uncle De Vere the veritable grunter that ever was victimised by the pork-monger, and is it not by the ring in the end of his nose, by which our charming Grace leads him to produce the spontaneous necessary to make possible the lovely match?"

"But what shall we do for a ring?" Indeed, Frank Parkhurst hasn't money enough to buy one, and Grace is as poor as a church-mouse!"

"It pays to be a pink of perfection, doesn't it?" said Philip, meditatively.

"I should think it did; but then their little grunter's fully played yet. Uncle De Vere might marry again."

"Oh," laughed Miss Berthold, in extreme good-nature, "but you haven't heard, then, the best of it. Why, Mr. De Vere, it is said, will actually settle four thousand pounds upon Grace the day she weds. That makes all things delightfully snug, you see!"

"I should say so," said Georgia, holding her breath.

"A Chinese well, indeed!" said Philip, who was relieved his feelings by a prolonged whistle.

"A pussy-cat, piggy-cat!" said I had also that she was a pussy-cat!" cried Georgia. "Oh that I had been born an orphan with a blacksmith's wife and the face of a China doll!"

Mrs. Ina Casew had hitherto listened in polite silence.

Now she spoke:

"May it please you young people, and especially Georgia," she said, "my heart is somewhat bewildered by this jargon of owls and pinkies, China dolls and piggy-cats. It may not be, probably is not, of the least consequence to me to know any thing further concerning the dramatic personae of your

rather mixed allegory; yet, being one of Mother Eve's daughters, I confess to my full share of the maternal inheritance, curiosity, and must beg you to let in a little light upon my darkened mind. Mr. Frank Parkhurst, your pink of perfection, Georgia, I think I have seen, but the China doll is a myth to me."

"Oh, it is a long story," said Georgia, in her rattle-headed way. "You've heard us speak of Uncle De Vere, surely. He is a widower without children, and immensely rich. As he is mamma's only brother, and we are his only nephews and nieces, of course we have always felt a friendly interest in him. He has a fancy for protégés, and Mr. Frank Parkhurst is one of them. The son of an old friend who died bankrupt, and, with more foresight than ever characterised him before, sent for Uncle De Vere in his dying hour, and left the dear boy to his care. The dear boy was fourteen then; he is twenty-two now, is well educated, has never done a stroke of work in his life, but has excelled Mr. Topsydroop himself in point of behaviour, and now it seems, after breaking the hearts of a score of girls who envy in him, or thought they did, the heir of Uncle De Vere's fortune, is going to marry Miss Grace De Vere, another of my uncle's protégés."

"You must know that the pink, with all his perfections, could never gain one atom of influence over Uncle De Vere, where money was concerned. His father was a spendthrift, and uncle took the liberty of believing that the son would never spend money so long as he had none to spend. So, beyond a liberal allowance of pocket-money, Frank has never been able to get a pound of uncle's into his keeping."

"But a year ago, just as he was getting desperate, one may suppose, along came this precious China doll, a De Vere some half-dozen degrees removed, and left destitute just at the time in life when girls need so much done for them, and appealed to uncle for help. Of course, with his nature and her face, it ended in his taking her up. And she has succeeded just where Frank failed. She actually handles uncle's purse-strings with the utmost freedom, and now that the two are to join their forces, there is no telling what they may be able to accomplish."

"How long will it be till the wedding?" asked Miss Carew, demurely.

"I'm sure I don't know," said Georgia, "but no doubt the thing will be hurried up. Four thousand pounds, indeed! and when Anna was married he only gave her her wedding-gown and a case of silvers."

The mention of the four thousand pounds had irritated Georgia a little, and her good-temper was really in danger of giving way.

And now, having listened to Miss Georgia's somewhat fanciful narration, let us seek a plain and unvarnished rehearsal of the facts.

Martin De Vere was, as Miss Georgia had intimated, a widower of great wealth. His wife had died a few months after their marriage, and he had proved to be one of the few heirs in the world whose enough to live constant to the memory of his father. For many years he had found in business a solace for his loneliness, passing much of his leisure in his sister's home. But as Mrs. McLain's children grew older, he saw in their many traits—the greater part of them owing, probably to the indulgent manner in which they were treated—wholly seemed somewhat to cool his affection towards them. Philip was lazy in his habits, and that he seemed so to a gentleman of the old time like Martin De Vere; Georgia was headstrong and free with her tongue; and Anna, who had married, was of a cool and calculating disposition, which, added to her extreme love for society, totally unfitted her to be a genial companion for her old uncle.

At fifty, with his fortune made and his hair growing grey, he yearned for the society of younger people, for the love of those who should be as children to him. At this time his old friend Parkhurst had died, and left a son penniless and friendless except as he found a friend in Mr. De Vere.

Frank Parkhurst grew up to be a youth of good parts, but of not too great energy. He had seen enough of the consequences of dissipated habits, as exhibited in the life of his father, to utterly shun them, and his heart was warm enough to experience sincere gratitude to his benefactor. Frank was just a good young man, well-educated, thanks to his guardian, pleasing in his manners, and true at heart, yet, as Mr. De Vere could not help suspecting, of so yielding a disposition that undue exposure to temptation might result disastrously to him.

It was for this reason that Mr. De Vere had been contented to keep him near himself, and to shield him from the inducements to turn astray, which beset the paths of young men who are thrown independently upon the world.

But at twenty-one this could not go on always. About this time it happened that Grace De Vere, the daughter of a second cousin of his, a cousin too who in her youth had been a dear friend of Martin De Vere, was brought to his attention.

She was a portionless girl, well-educated, but earning her living as a seamstress.

"The Pink of Perfection" was a name not ill-bestowed, but the China Doll was, as each epigrammatic term is apt to be, a little exaggerated.

Grace De Vere had, it is true, regular features, a pink-and-white complexion, lustrous dark hair and eyes, and manners rather exceptionally quiet and subdued.

Yet she was a girl of strong character and deep affections.

In her Mr. De Vere saw at once, or thought he did, a woman who would make a perfect wife for Frank.

Since it was with this end in view that he took her into his family, it may be imagined that when Frank, with exemplary docility, proceeded to fall in love with her, and when at last he proposed to her, and being referred to Mr. De Vere for his approval, laid his suit before his guardian, without indeed any great enthusiasm, but yet with perfect sincerity, Mr. De Vere was greatly pleased.

The happiness of the two beings in whom he was most nearly interested seemed to him secure.

For himself he had not given a thought to the subject of how his sister's children might look upon the match.

But Grace was a girl of penetration. She was on pleasant enough terms with the McLains, and she desired to remain so, but she was well aware that the crust of civility which overlay their manners was thin enough, and quite likely to break through when any pointed act of favoritism on the part of Mr. De Vere should arouse their jealousy.

When, therefore, Mr. De Vere had proposed to settle four thousand pounds upon her upon her wedding-day, she had quietly determined.

"I fear," she said, "that it will make trouble between the families. Georgia, I am sure, will not take it kindly, and I think Mrs. McLain would have serious objections."

"But what right has she to make objections, I should like to know?" said Mr. De Vere, rather pettishly. "I shall not do the least for them because I choose to make you and Frank comfortable. They know very well that I have always treated Frank like a brother in the matter of money, and if I prefer not to extend the same system of patronage to you, what business is that of theirs? I should like to know?"

"You are quite right, abstractedly, no doubt," Grace replied, "but that does not alter the fact that there will be hard feelings if you carry out your proposed plan, and generous as its provisions are towards Frank and myself, I shall feel sorry to incur through them the dislike of your relatives."

"But what am I to do? I have already provided for Georgia and Anna in my will, in a manner of which they will not complain, I hope. What more would you have me do?"

"It is not for me to suggest," said Grace, "but I am sure if you would quietly acquiesce Mrs. McLain with that fact, it might save some hard feelings." "I might do that, I suppose," said Mr. De Vere, "though I'm not much given to making promises. If I do it, it shall be also understood that it is at your request."

Grace held her peace. She knew very well that Mrs. McLain would owe her no good-will for her suggestions, since the implication was so strong that she had been first in Mr. De Vere's confidence. Yet, in a matter so full of complications she could not be certain that any other course was better.

On the very evening, therefore, that Georgia had heard and rehearsed the news of the approaching wedding, her mother had been closeted with Mr. De Vere, to resolve the intelligence from her quarters, and with it the news that a sum equal to that sent forth upon Grace would be the portion of each of her daughters, while Philip would be equally well cared for.

When, therefore, Mrs. McLain reached her own home just before the dinner-hour, Georgia and Philip were quietly sent for to her dressing-room, and there made acquainted with the news in detail.

"Your uncle was very good," said their mother, "and showed me very good-temperedly that he had quite the right to please himself in this matter, and that if we took it quietly and treated Grace as a friend and equal, he would not allow our interests to suffer, and I am sure besides, my children, that any dereliction on our part will only provoke his anger, and lead him in the end to do far less for you than he now proposes."

The young people acquiesced in this view of matters, and it seemed to all concerned that matters were progressing prosperously.

But they did not take into account Miss Ina Carew.

Miss Carew had been an interested listener of the morning's conversation. She had very readily taken in the facts, all of them new to her—for she was only a boarding-school friend of Georgia's—that Mr. De Vere, the uncle of her dear Georgia, was middle-aged, wealthy, and without a direct heir. That Frank Parkhurst was very likely to inherit the larger part of his estate in the end, but that he was at present engaged to a girl whom her friends denominated the China doll, no doubt a mere nonentity. Here was a bow placed in her hands with two strings to it. Why should it not be made to fly her arrows as well as another's?

Of course Miss Carew knew nothing of the supplementary part of the day's proceedings, and judging from the tone of the young people in the morning's chat, she had no idea that she should find in Mrs. McLain or her family any very active opponents of her schemes. She had come, it is true, for merely a visit of a week. She set herself at once to plan for a prolongation of her stay, and for ways and means of being brought in contact with Mr. De Vere and his family.

In this latter respect fortune favoured her. Mrs. McLain felt it incumbent upon her at once to invite Mr. De Vere and his protégés to a family dinner-party. It was a proper matter, she told the young people, in which to express their approval and congratulations. It was to be, indeed, a sort of ratification meeting.

As Miss Carew understood the whole matter, her presence need be no hindrance, and the party was ordained immediately.

Frank, meantime, could hardly be called an enthusiastic lover. He resigned himself indeed to his obvious fate in a very contented spirit, but Miss Carew had not long been in the room with him before she concluded that he entertained no very serious passion for his fiancée, and that, therefore, the ground in that direction was reasonably clear.

In another half hour, however, a more daring scheme had presented itself to her mind. Mr. De Vere was a very well-preserved gentleman of the old time. He was tall, erect, and of fine presence. His shock of white hair standing upright upon his head gave him a Jacksonian appearance, and with his faultless dress and manners made him a marked man in any company.

Moreover, was he not a man of large fortune and great social eminence? What, then, he being single, was to prevent him from falling a victim to Miss Carew's schemes? What, indeed?

So while Mrs. McLain was labouring in good faith, to make all things as agreeable as possible to this amiably-disposed old gentleman and the young people whom he chose to honour, her guest, who sat meekly apart, and seemed to feel herself quite unworthy to be a sharer of so much purely private and domestic felicity, was in reality scheming darkly against the peace of all present.

It was not until after dinner that she made her first move. She was asked to sing, as she had expected to be, for she had a very fine voice, and that being one of her weapons of war, she kept it always in good condition for offensive service.

On this occasion, when Philip said to her: "Miss Carew, won't you favour us? Uncle is fond of good music, and will, I am sure, appreciate your singing," she made none of the customary apologies for deprecations, but amiably and gracefully permitted herself to be conducted to the piano.

She was trained to sing operas, and Philip arranged for her upon the rack the notes of a familiar aria, which she proceeded to execute in the most approved manner.

When it was finished, however, and the applause it evoked had subsided, she said, very sweetly:

"Shall I sing you a ballad now? This is a favourite with me."

And she commenced a dainty bit of song that was popular fifty years ago.

It proved a trump card for her.

At its close, Mr. De Vere approached the piano, and said:

"I thank you, Miss Carew, very sincerely, for the pleasure which you have given me. It is seldom that young ladies now-a-days care to sing the songs of my youth, even if they ever heard of them, and the pleasure is, therefore, a rare one, and made more perfect in this instance by the excellence of the performance. I thank you very much."

"I am quite delighted," said Miss Carew, "to have given you pleasure. I learned a good many of the songs of the old time to please mamma, who enjoys them. Indeed, my voice has been trained



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more to please my own domestic circle than for any more public display."

"Oh," said Georgia, with genuine good-nature, "if you know other songs of that sort, do sing them. I'm sure we all like them. I must learn some myself for uncle's sake."

So the ballad singing went on for the next half hour, and at the end of that time, not only had Mr. De Vere arrived at the conclusion that Miss Carew was an unusually charming and amiable young lady, but Mr. Frank Parkhurst had reached almost identically the same view of the case.

Mrs. McLain was delighted that Georgia's guest had contributed so much to the pleasure of the evening; and Georgia herself was determined to set about learning ballad music the very next day.

Of the whole company, only the China doll, quiet Grace De Vere, had any idea of the intricate net which Fate, or Miss Carew, was weaving.

And Grace saw it all.

She went home that night with some rather curious and very unusual ideas revolving in her brain.

But she was wise enough to convey no hint of them to the male bipeds who accompanied her.

She had even the discretion to make no unfavourable comments, when Frank and her uncle next morning at breakfast, poured forth their enthusiasm over Miss Carew.

Which was very wonderful discretion for a China doll.

"Really," said Frank, after breakfast, "we ought to pay Georgia's friend some attention. Grace, can't we get up a water party for her, or something?"

"Not a water party, by any means," said Mr. De Vere. "I'm sure she would be timid. I think indeed she told me as much last evening; but let us have a lawn party, by all means. She is fond of croquet, I'm very sure."

Grace smiled in spite of some inward amazement. Rowing was Frank's favourite accomplishment, while Mr. De Vere abominated a boat.

Frank, on the other hand, was averse to croquet, considered it dull, while the elder gentleman was never tired of it.

But Frank was too good-natured, or else had too little energy, to oppose Mr. De Vere, so the lawn party prevailed; while Frank, who had the persistence which seems so often given to people who are not aggressive, secretly resolved to take Miss Carew out boating some day quite alone.

Frank was quiet in his manners, and never distinguished himself in a crowd, but he had an idea that alone with Miss Carew, in his row-boat on the river, he could behave very effectively.

In short, make quite an impression upon Miss Carew.

But the lawn party first.

It is not to be supposed that Grace De Vere was insensible to the effect produced upon the gentleman most nearly related to her by Miss Carew's charms.

But Grace was a discreet young person.

Perhaps it was to this quality as much as to any other that she owed the fact that she was now the petted protégé of a wealthy man rather than a pale and worn-out seamstress, keeping starvation at bay with the point of her needle.

And being discreet, she had far too much at stake not to keep cool.

When, therefore, the lawn party was preferred, she fell into the plan with great readiness, and made her preparations with diligence and care.

She greatly felt the need of a confidant and ally, but she knew of no one at present in whom she dared confide.

Miss Carew was a stranger to her, and she was not quite certain that her plans, at least so far as Frank

was concerned, might not be seconded by Mrs. McLain and her family.

"Of one thing, however, she was reasonably certain.

If Miss Carew should carry her designs upon Mr. De Vere to too great a length, the McLains would develop as much opposition as she could desire. For this reason, the weight of her influence was given very sincerely in favour of the lawn party.

It was a very pretty scene into which the guests were ushered.

The afternoon proved everything that could be desired; the lawn was shaven as smooth as velvet, and the century-old elms which studded it spread their foliage over it in just sufficient masses to break the force of the rather warm sunlight which came dancing through and set the shadows all a-quiver and aglow.

Parterres of rare and lovely flowers bloomed just on the edge of the croquet-grounds, filling the air with their perfumes, and here and there over the rather extensive grounds were scattered rustic seats and little vine-trellised arbours, while in the distance a fine stream, which widened out into a beautiful pond, lent its murmur and its glow to the scene.

Miss Carew, arrayed in a faultless costume, and looking all innocence and amiability, surveyed it with satisfaction.

"It is certainly a spoil worth the winning," she said to herself. "And with only that white-faced Miss De Vere between me and it, I shall be an idiot to let it slip through my fingers."

Miss Carew had an especial training with reference to elderly gentlemen.

It was with just such a case as the present in view that her mamma had insisted upon training her voice to ballad-singing.

In divers other ways, also, she had been possessed by her discreet and provident mamma with a knowledge of the ways and weaknesses of gentlemen who are past their youth.

Yet there was enough of nature left in Miss Carew to make her prefer the society of beaux of her own age.

That, or else she was practising the favourite female game of indirection.

At any rate, her first overtures were made towards Frank; or, to speak with more exact truthfulness, she managed very soon to evade the attentions of Mr. De Vere, and to accept those which Frank was ready enough to offer. She did it, too, very deftly.

"No," she said to Mr. De Vere. "It is best that I should play with Frank. Those young ladies who have come with the Franklyns are dying to be upon your side, and they are really greater strangers than I am. So I shall yield precedence to them."

"By-and-bye, then?"

"Oh, certainly. Nothing could give me greater pleasure. But mamma taught me that it is always best to consult the general good, even at the sacrifice of somewhat of one's own pleasure."

And she tripped gaily away to join Frank, who was already calling her.

Grace had made a pretence of watching for some late arrivals, and so had not joined the game. In reality, she preferred to be a looker-on. In ten minutes she had fathomed Miss Carew's plan of laying siege to Frank first, holding Mr. De Vere in reserve. In reality, Grace was much attached to her betrothed. She knew well that he was not a man of great power of will, and she felt that he had acquiesced in his uncle's plans more because it seemed a proper and wise thing to do, than because he felt for her any very deep affection; but she knew, too, that he was sweet tempered, a gentleman in his habits, and she judged that there would develop in him a quiet fidelity and a steadiness to the interests of his own family which would stand her instead of more showy traits. So she really had excellent reasons for desiring to thwart what she was now thoroughly convinced were Miss Carew's intentions.

When the game was over, therefore, she said to him, with a certain sweetness which was quite characteristic of her, but which few ever observed in her but those who knew her well:

"Come, Frank, I object to your playing any more just at present. You must help me a little in the general oversight of things. Miss Carew must be made acquainted with some of the other guests, but uncle will attend to that. I will resign you to her after awhile, with great pleasure."

Frank, who had in reality no thought of neglecting Grace, obeyed with commendable alacrity, and five minutes later Miss Carew was fulfilling her promise to play a game of croquet with Mr. De Vere.

It was not difficult for Grace to keep Frank by her side for the remainder of the afternoon, and to see that no obstacles were thrown in Miss Carew's way,

and the result was that a very pretty flirtation sprang up between her and her elderly admirer.

After the second game of croquet refreshments were announced. It was a fancy of Grace to have them served out of doors.

The table was arranged in an arbour, and thence the viands were dispensed by swift and neat handed servitors all over the grounds.

The larger part of the guests were, indeed, seated upon the rustic chairs and benches near the croquet-grounds, but it was quite allowable to take one's cup and plate and stray off into any shady nook of the grounds, and Grace had made sure that even so no one should be overlooked.

Thus it happened that Mr. De Vere and Miss Carew were seated quite by themselves in a little arbour by the border of the stream, when Philip McLain espied them, and to his practised eye it was soon evident that Miss Carew was playing her best hand upon the old gentleman.

He went straight to his mother.

"Mamma," he said, "what do you really know about Ina Carew?" and then with a twinkle of his eye, for Philip never quite lost the humour of a situation, "is she a proper person for Uncle De Vere to think of marrying?"

"Why, Philip," said Mrs. McLain, "what can you mean? I should suppose it was an absurdity for your uncle to think of marrying any one. As for Miss Carew, I only know that she is well-connected, and was a friend of Georgia's at school."

"Well," said Philip, "I advise you to have your eyes open, at any rate. It may be all right, but I had half a suspicion the other evening that all that ballad-singing was not for nothing."

"But," said Georgia, "I thought it was Frank at whom she was aiming. Of course I knew very well when I asked her here, that she was up to the ways of girls who have no home—she and her mamma board, and have for years—but who would have thought of her setting her cap for uncle? Of course he won't think of such a thing as marrying at his age?"

"Not at all of course," said Mrs. McLain. "Far stranger things have happened than that he should be taken in by a shrewd, adventurous, and to think that she introduced her."

At that moment Mr. De Vere was seen to be returning to the croquet-ground, with the amiable and innocent Miss Carew leaning affectionately upon his arm.

Mrs. McLain went instantly to meet them.

"Why, brother," she exclaimed, "is it you who have spirited Miss Carew away? There have been a dozen inquiries for her. The dancing is to begin soon."

"I am aware of that," said Mr. De Vere, "and I am on my way to direct the musicians to give us first some quadrille music. Miss Carew is to be my partner. I find she knows all the old figures. It is seldom that one finds a young lady of these times so sensibly educated as she has been."

Mrs. McLain was desperate.

"For Heaven's sake, where is Frank?" she exclaimed to Grace, as she turned away from the infatuated old gentleman. "That girl is bent on mischief, and only Frank can divert her. Explain the situation to him at once, and set him to the rescue. You can do it."

But Grace was wiser.

"No," she said. "Do you ask Frank. He will see the truth through your eyes much more quickly than through mine."

Mrs. McLain saw the wisdom of this suggestion instantly.

Yet she had never before made an ally of Frank, and it was hard to do it now.

Grace was a De Vere, and so had some claim; but Frank was an alien and an interloper, and as such she had always, in her secret heart, regarded him. But this was a crisis in which minor matters must go to the wall.

In the face of a danger like that which stared her in the face, she could not afford to sacrifice her whole family interest to a prejudice.

So, much to Grace's amusement, she posted off with a wry face to Frank.

"My dear Frank," she said, "do you see what is afoot? Go at once, I pray you, and claim Miss Carew for a dance; do anything that suggests itself to you to get her away from Mr. De Vere. I do believe the creature is setting her toils for him, and what is more, he behaves precisely like a man who is infatuated enough to commit any absurdity. It is I, or rather Georgia, who has brought her here, and you must help us to foil her plans."

Frank felt inclined to rub his eyes, as one waking from a dream.

"Really, Mrs. McLain," he said, "I think you must be mistaken. Mr. De Vere is no doubt pleased with Miss Carew; that is quite natural; but that she should think for a moment—"

Mrs. McLain allowed a little ejaculation of mingled disgust and despair to escape her.

"Are you, too, infatuated," she said, "with her transparent affectation of innocence? I tell you she is a fortune-hunter. She is determined either to break off your engagement with Grace, and marry you herself, or, failing that, to ruin your prospects for ever by marrying my brother. There you have it in plain English. Now what will you do about it?"

"Really, Mrs. McLain," said Frank, half-amused, "you must give me very little credit for powers of perception, since you put the matter so plainly. But if Mr. De Vere chooses to marry Miss Carew, I don't see that I am called upon to interfere. She might make him very happy—how do I know?—and I surely shall not be so ungrateful as to interfere with his serious wishes."

Mrs. McLain grew desperate.

"But think," she said, "how it will affect your own prospects and those of Grace."

"Well," said Frank, "I believe, Mrs. McLain, that you have always thought me far too ready to take advantage of Mr. De Vere's goodness to further my own interests. I fear, also, that you have counted my affection for Grace as founded upon self-interest, but I assure you that if Mr. De Vere should marry to-morrow, not only would I not raise my smallest finger to prevent it, but I should still continue to love and to desire to marry Miss Grace, and I should not despair of being able to win a home in which to place her."

Mrs. McLain was surprised. She had never thought so much of Frank before as now that she found it quite useless to appeal to his self-interest. She changed her tactics at once.

"But, Frank," she said, "I cannot think, neither will you, I am sure, upon reflection, that it will be a happy thing for my brother to marry Miss Carew. She is certainly not the person that either you or I should choose to make him a good wife. I believe, indeed, that she is little better than an adventuress. I trust that you will be generous enough to help me rescue him from the danger of a step which he would regret all the remainder of his life."

Frank smiled and answered drily:

"Neither you or I, madam, may be wholly fitted to judge what manner of wife would suit my guardian best. Pardon me if I cannot see Miss Carew exactly with your eyes. She seems to me rather an estimable and engaging young lady, and I am not sure but Mr. De Vere would be very much to be congratulated if he should win her, however much you and I might have reason to regret the step during the remainder of our lives."

It was evident that Frank was obdurate, and Mrs. McLain went off to consult once more with Philip and Georgia. As she crossed the grounds she had occasion to pass the dancers, and then fuel was added to the fire of her wrath by seeing her brother engaged in dancing a stately old-fashioned measure with Miss Carew, and by hearing the excited and enthusiastic comments of the lookers-on.

"How graceful they are! Isn't it a lovely sight?" "Really, one would fancy Mr. De Vere had renewed his youth. Indeed he is not old. If he would only come out of his seclusion and mingle more in society, he would be quite a beau yet."

"Yes," added the mamma of six daughters, "he would be in that case the best match in the county. But what would become of the McLains, then, and those other protégés of his?"

Mrs. McLain gnashed her teeth, and pressed on. Reaching Philip, she said:

"I can do nothing whatever with Frank. He assumes that if Mr. De Vere chooses to marry Miss Carew, it might be a good thing for him, and he has no right whatever to interfere. He certainly will not lift his finger to prevent it."

"That is the pink of perfection to the letter," said Georgia, scornfully. "But, mamma, have you tried Grace? She has sense enough, and really I think it would do very little good for Frank to interfere, while with Grace the matter would be far different. Let us consult with her, at least."

Grace stood apart watching the play with interest.

She was quite quick enough to perceive that if she and Frank could be the means of breaking up this dangerous infatuation, it would ensure the lasting acknowledgments of the McLains, and go far toward obliterating some old prejudices against them.

Therefore when called into consultation she coolly said:

"We can do nothing to-day. I will try to find out whether uncle is really in earnest, or whether he is only amusing himself, and if we find that he is really infatuated with Miss Carew—for with you I think it can be only an infatuation—I know of but one honourable course for us to pursue, and that is to manage in some way to show her to him in her true colours."

"But how are we to manage it?" said Philip. "If some younger man of equally good fortune were to appear upon the stage," suggested Grace, "I fancy she would be at little pains to throw the elderly lover over for him."

Philip mused for a moment in silence.

"Grace," he said, at length, "you are a trump. Frank was talking the other day of a boating party. See to it that he arranges for it in three days' time. I have some college friends good at the oar, and I'll have them here by all means. We shall see what we shall see."

Mr. De Vere accompanied Miss Carew to his sister's house that evening in a very delectable frame of mind.

Miss Carew's fascinations had somehow had the effect to roll off the burden of a score or more of years from Mr. De Vere's shoulders, and he felt, as he bade her good-bye under the shadows of the elms, very much as he would have done when he was thirty.

He went home to dream of her, and woke the next morning still lost in a trance in which the memories of the day that was gone had him full in their sway.

Preparations for the boating party were commenced at once, and so determined was the old gentleman to bask himself in the smiles of his Dulcinea, that he resolved to overcome his prejudices against the water, and make one of the party.

Meantime Philip had sent invitations to his college friends, and had received affirmative answers. Among them was Mr. Max Dunbar, whom Philip represented to be the heir of an immense fortune, and a gentleman of wide experience.

He was superlatively handsome and accomplished, and indeed altogether a prize of the first magnitude.

"Now, Georgia," said Mrs. McLain, soberly, at the breakfast-table, "I hope you will be very careful about your toilet to-day. Mr. Dunbar is of course very fastidious in his tastes, and really I should regard his approval as a great distinction. I have always told you that I despise anything like angling for a husband, but then any attention from a gentleman of Mr. Dunbar's position is itself a compliment which no young lady can be insensible to. He is sure to notice you as belonging to the family, and I trust your appearance will be such as to please him."

Georgia bowed her head, and discreetly signified her intention to obey the maternal mandate, and when the party gathered in the parlour previous to departure, her appearance proved the sincerity of her promise.

Her very freshest and jauntiest costume had been brought out, and she alone in her sweetest and brightest smiles.

But Miss Carew was not to be outdone.

She, too, had evidently made a morning study of her toilet, and was armed at all points for objective warfare.

Mr. De Vere was early on hand to act as her escort, but Mrs. McLain, whose senses were all preternaturally acute that day, thought she discovered the slightest possible falling off in the warmth of Miss Carew's welcome.

Mr. De Vere, also, with the nervousness natural to a man who hated the water, was somewhat ill at his ease, yet his devotion to Miss Carew was quite as apparent as ever.

Mr. Dunbar and his friends were to join them at the boat-landing, and on the way to the river both Georgia and Miss Carew were unusually quiet.

By this time it seemed well understood that there was to be rivalry between the two girls, though not a word on the part of either had indicated the fact.

Frank, as the host of the day, was on the alert, and accomplished the introductions and assigned places for his guests in the boats in the most unexceptionable manner.

Miss Carew and Mr. De Vere, Georgia and Max, and Philip and a Miss Franklyn, made the crew of one, while the remainder of the party were disposed in the other boats. As Mr. De Vere was not a waterman, even had his years not prevented his taking part in the labour of rowing he was the only gentleman in the boat who was entirely at liberty to make himself agreeable to the ladies. But Philip and Max, while they bent gallantly to their oars, managed to keep themselves quite well aware of what was going on around them, and to spare a moment now and then for gaiety and smiles.

Mr. Dunbar, as in duty bound, devoted himself to Georgia, and that young lady displayed a tact in drawing him out and helping him to place himself in an advantageous light, under rather difficult circumstances, which would have done credit to a practised diplomatist.

Before they reached Fair Point, at which place they were to debark, Miss Carew was made to feel

that Georgia was sure to carry off the honours of the day unless she could manage to make a diversion in her own favour.

But to do this was not so easy.

Mr. De Vere, with the eagerness and intensity of a middle-aged lover, was bent upon monopolising her time and her attention, and nothing short of a positive repulse would set her free to practise her fascinations upon Mr. Dunbar.

They had landed at Fair Point, and were well under way in their preparations for dinner, before Miss Carow saw an opportunity for breaking the chain which bound her.

But at last, taking advantage of an opportune moment, she said to Grace:

"Dear Miss De Vere, do let me assist you about setting the table. I know you think I have been very selfish, but really Mr. De Vere, for a gentleman opposed to water parties, has managed to make himself so entertaining that I have not found a minute at my disposal."

"Yes," said Grace. "I have noticed that you were devoted to such other. Uncle is quite a gallant, when he takes the fancy to be."

"A perfect flirt, I tell him," laughed Miss Carow. "But really it is ridiculous for me to allow him to be so exclusive. I'm going to flirt with every gentleman of the party before I go home, by way of showing my independence."

"Mr. De Vere," said Frank, after dinner, "there is a point just a little way from here from which it seems to me a lovely view could be obtained, if only a few trees were cut away. Just now every one's busy; and if you will walk with me to it I should like to show it to you."

"Certainly," said Mr. De Vere, a little hesitantly, as he looked across the table to where Miss Dunbar was engaged in a rather boisterous game of piquet with Miss Carow. "I am glad you have an eye to improvements, Frank, it looks well in a young man to be attentive to these matters."

So they moved slowly off down the river to a point where the view was obstructed by a few trees and a thicket of underbush.

Near this thicket Frank paused, and engaged the elder gentleman in a somewhat lengthy discussion of the points of the situation.

Presently voices were heard from the other side of the thicket.

"Yes," said Miss Carow, "I own that he has been a little taken, but then of course it is quite absurd to think of my really being in love with him—a man of his years. It is good fun, though to see these old beaux put on the airs and graces of their youth, and really believe that they are making effective use of them." Mr. De Vere turned very pale.

"I think we had better go," he said; and Frank very willingly moved on, pretending all the while that he had heard nothing.

When they were fairly out of ear-shot, Miss Dunbar said to Miss Carow:

"Well, we have had a pleasant day. I have not enjoyed myself so much for a long time. I do wish my little Clara had been here."

"And who, pray, is your little Clara?" asked Miss Carow, somewhat amazed.

"Oh, have they not told you that I am soon to be married to the dearest little angel in the world. Why, I thought everybody knew that."

"I must say," said Miss Carow, rather coolly, "that you have behaved yourself as little as possible like an engaged young man. I should not like my lover to be so demonstrative as you have been, at least."

"Well," he said, with imperturbable sang-froid, "you shall train your lover as it pleases you, but fortunately my little Clara is not in the least jealous."

They walked back again, then, to the rest of the party.

Mr. De Vere was standing a little apart from the rest, looking rather glum, when Miss Carow, bent upon retrieving the ground she had lost, before it was too late, rushed up to him, and exclaimed:

"You are looking lonely, sir. I fear you have not had an agreeable day. Let us go into the woods, and I will plant a wreath of leaves for your hat."

"Really," said Mr. De Vere, rather severely, "I am afraid that is too juvenile a diversion for a man of my years."

"Nonsense," she replied; "why, you are the youngest man here, in your feelings. Mr. Dunbar now is blind, and even Philip is far more awake in the ways of worldliness than yourself. Indulge yourself for this once with a crown of oak leaves."

Yesterday this little speech would have seemed very audacious and very sincere, but just now Mr. De Vere could not forget the words he had heard behind the alders. Looking at Miss Carow with firm eyes and with slow scorn in his speech he said:

"Pardon me, Miss Carow; but when old people like myself take upon themselves the airs and graces

of their youth, and really think that they are making effective use of them, they are apt to become ridiculous in the eyes of the young females of this generation."

It was a rather ridiculous speech, but it had its effect upon Miss Carow.

"Indeed, Mr. De Vere," she commenced.

But he interrupted her:

"No words, madam; if you please. I have been an old fool, but I have the consolation of knowing that I have not been alone in my folly. We shall part as we met. I shall have still my good name and my bank account, and a faithful family about me, and you will have—your changes."

It was severe, but it was not untruthful.

Miss Carow went home from the boating party a sadder and a wiser woman. Mrs. McLean's solicited in her heart, and gave due heed of that to Frank and Grace for their wise and witty management; and Georgia's heart was rejoiced on the day of the wedding, which soon followed, by the promise that on her wedding-day, since Mr. Franklyn had proposed on the day of the boating party, was not far distant—a marriage portion similar to that of Grace should be settled upon her.

Mr. De Vere soon recovered from the little fit of ill-temper into which the discovery of Miss Carow's falsity had thrown him, and lived none the less respected by his family and friends for the episode; and I think he is in doubt, to-day, as to whether he owed his escape to the efforts of his young friend, or whether it was wholly providential.

FACTS.

IN LIQUOR.

THE following story was lately told by a reformed inebriate, as an apology for much of the folly of drunkards:

A mouse ranging about a brewery happening to fall into one of the vats of beer, was in immediate danger of drowning, and appealed to a cat to help him out.

The cat replied:

It is a foolish request, for as soon as I get you I shall eat you."

The mouse plausibly replied that that fate would be better than to be drowned in beer.

The cat lifted him out, but the fumes of the beer caused passing sneezes.

The mouse took refuge in his hole. The cat called upon the mouse to come out.

"You are safe! Did you not promise that I should eat you?"

"Ah," replied the mouse, "but you know that I was in liquor at the time."

A MAIDEN lady, suspecting her female servant was regaling her beau upon the cold mutton of the larder, called Betty, and inquired whether she did not hear someone speaking with her downstairs.

"Oh, no, ma'am," replied the girl; "it was only me singing a psalm."

"You may amuse yourself, Betty," replied the maiden, "with psalms, but let's have no hints, Betty. I have a great objection to hints."

Betty courted, withdrew, and took the hint.

WHY HE CALLED HER HONEY.

"MOTHER, why does he call you honey?"

"Because, my dear, he loves me."

"No, ma, that isn't it."

"What is it, then?"

"I know."

"Well, what is it?"

"Why, because you have so much comb in your head, that's why."

THE EAST NAME.

"Who are you named after?" we asked of a bright little fellow of seven years:

"My father, sir; only I have not his last name."

"How is that, my boy; I think all children have their father's last names, if no other."

"Oh, but I have not. My father's name is Edward Marsh Frazier Senior, and mine is Edward Marsh Frazier Junior."

A GENTLE sprinkle of rain falling, a ploughboy left his work and went home, when his master told him he should not have come in doors for such a sprinkle, and that in future he must stay out until it rained downright.

Some time after the boy came home drenched to the skin.

His master asked him why he did not come before.

"You see," replied the boy, "that I shoulda come home afore it rained downright, and the rain has been afloat all day long."

A CHINAMAN one day stepped into a well-known jeweller's, and asked one of the shopkeepers to show him a few "consignments."

The puzzled man asked the Celestial to explain, whereat he said he didn't know how to explain, but since he had been in this country he had often heard that a consistency is a jewel, and he, therefore, thought that jewellers should have the places to find it.

"Do you have any diamonds?" asked the Celestial, "I have a few." "Do you have any rubies?" asked the Celestial, "I have a few." "Do you have any sapphires?" asked the Celestial, "I have a few."

"Do I believe in second loves?" asked the Celestial, "I believe in second loves." "And when it's gone do you want another piece, and isn't that quick, too?" "Indeed, I believe in second loves."

"I believe in second loves," said the Celestial, "I believe in second loves."

It is related of Miss C., a laughing, loving, good-natured lass, who was spending an afternoon with a neighbour, and during supper the conversation turned on hens, eggs, &c., when Miss C. observed that their hens did not lay exactly any eggs, and she could not give any reason for it.

"Why," observed Mr. P., "my hens lay very well; I go out among them almost every day and get eggs."

"My gracious!" was the instant rejoinder. "I wish you would come over to our house and sit with our hens. I am sure father would pay you well for your trouble."

QUI TAM.

A YOUNG man in "these parts," who had spent a little of his own time and a good deal of his father's money in fitting for the Bar, was asked, after his examination how he got along.

"Oh, well," said he. "I answered one question right."

"Ah, indeed?" said the old gentleman, with looks of satisfaction at his son's peculiar sharpness. "And what was that?"

"They asked me what a qui tam action was."

"That was a hard one. And you answered it correctly, did you?"

"Yes. I told them I did not know."

"Have you further good news, Billy?"

"Ees, mother."

"Be 'ee bad, Billy?"

"Ees, mother, twif."

"Did 'ee whack yer, Billy?"

"No, no, mother; he hadn't sense enough to."

FRATERNITY.

A FRENCH marquis had written a French book on America. It is also on Americans, and lies heavy—some might with good show of reason, say roughly and heavily. The American press, and some portions of the English, are extremely angry. But why care? The production of a French Marquis can never be considered of more than tentative character.

—Fun.

A PAT ANSWER.

FARMER: "Share now, Mary, it's kinder for me to be talking to him that way."

MARY: "Arrah thin, it's myself that'll not talk to him any more; share I'll shake in a whisper entirely."

—Fun.

THE QUAKER AND THE PARSON.

A QUAKER, that was a barber, being sued by the parson for tithes, Yea and Nay went to him and demanded the reason why he troubled him; as he had never had any dealings with him in his whole life.

"Why," says the parson, "it is for tithes."

"For tithes?" says the Quaker; "pr'ythe, indeed, upon what account?"

"Why," says the parson, "for preaching in the church."

"Alas, then," replied the Quaker, "I have nothing to pay thee, for I come not there."

"Oh, but you might," says the parson, "for the deacons are always open at convenient times;" and thereupon said he would be paid, seeing it was due.

Yea and Nay thereupon shook his head, and making several wry faces, departed, and immediately returned his action (it being a expiation town) against the parson for forty shillings. The parson, upon notice of this, came to him, and very hotly demanded why he put such disgrace upon him, and for what he owed him the money.

"Truly, indeed," replied the Quaker, "for trimming?"

"For trimming?" said the parson; "why, I was never trimmed by you in my life."

"Oh, but thou mightest have come and been trimmed if thou hadst pleased, for my doors are always open at convenient times as well as thine."

HE HAD SEEN TALMA.

They were talking about Talma.

An old man of ninety-five was dozing in his arm-chair.

"Talma?" he said, rousing himself.

The young people all crowded round him, eagerly.

"You knew Talma?"

"Yes. His father was a dentist.

"Go on! Talma, the great, the illustrious, the magnificent tragedian!"

"Magnificent? Ay, you may talk of your actors, you youngsters; but Talma—I saw him once."

"You did? You did? What in?"

"A hack!"

"There are two things, says a contemporary, which will make us happy in life. Only two things. Let our patrons read and remember. The first is, 'Never to vex ourselves about what we can't help,' and the second is, 'Never to vex ourselves about what we can help.'"

"What a traveller you have become!" exclaimed an Englishman on meeting an acquaintance at Constantinople.

"To tell you the truth," was the frank reply, "I am obliged to run about the world to keep ahead of my character; the moment it overtakes me I am ruined; but I don't care who knows as long as I travel incognito."

JUVENILE FIBS.

"Where have you been, Charlie?"

"In the garden, ma."

"No; you have been swimming. You know I cautioned you about going to the creek. I shall have to correct you. Look at your hair, how wet it is."

"Oh, no, ma, it is not water; it is sweat."

"Ah, Charlie, I have caught you fibbing; your shirt is wrong side out."

"Boy, triumphantly!"

"Oh, I did that just now, ma, climbing the fence."

A LIVELY LOOK OUT FOR JONES.

"Oh, mamma, that's Captain Jones's knock! I know he has come to ask me to be his wife!"

"Well, my dear, you must accept him."

"But I thought you hated him so!"

"Hate him? I do—so much, that I mean to be his mother-in-law!"

(Revenge is sweet, especially to women.)

—Punch.

UNREPORTED "ATROCITY" IN THE CITY.

CITY MISCHANCE: "Where did you go, this autumn, Brown? Scarborough? Well, did you enjoy your holiday, or did you take your missis?"

—Punch.

MORE HONEYMOON AMENITIES.

ANGELINA (who has been perusing the "Births, Deaths, and Marriages"): "Edwin, I do so object to that horrid word 'Relict'! If I should die, Edwin, promise, oh, promise, you will not allow me to be described as your relict!"

—Punch.

A REPROOF.

COUNTRY GENT (late a Citizen, who has missed an easy shot): "Confound the thing!"

GILES (with the bag): "Oh, measter! don't I wish I'd had a stoan!"

—Punch.

"OUR (OLD) BOYS."

When will "Our Boys" have ceased to run?"

"When?" we ask. Echo answers

"When?"

To all appearance, not until

"Our Boys" have run into Old Men.

—Punch.

FACING TROUBLE.

CONTENTED PERSON: "Now, come along quiet to school, yer young ruffin, and dew try and look appy fur you'll find wet I've found, has 'ow has a good hedication and a pleasant haffable face u'll soon make yer way in the world fur yer. I've allus found it so!"

—Fun.

MOTTO FOR DAIRIES.—One good churn deserves another.

—Fun.

STATISTICS.

THE TURKISH CIVIL LIST.—The new Sultan has fixed at the following figures the monthly allowances to be served to the families of his predecessors: The family of the late Abdul Aziz to receive in the aggregate a monthly average of 235,000 piastres, viz., the Valide Sultana, the mother of Abdul Aziz, 50,000 piastres; Prince Yussouf Izzeddin Effendi,

30,000 piastres; first wife of the Sultan (first cadine), 20,000 piastres; Salihé Sultana, 15,000 piastres; Mithoud Djehal Eddin Effendi and three other Effendis, from 20,000 to 15,000 piastres; Nasimé Sultana, 10,000 piastres; Isma Sultana, 10,000 piastres; Eminéh Sultana, 10,000 piastres; second cadine, 10,000 piastres; third cadine, 15,000 piastres. The family of the ex-Sultan Murad are in the weekly receipt of 275,000 piastres, divided as follows: Selah Eddin Effendi, 20,000 piastres; Hadidje Sultana, 10,000 piastres; Fehiméh Sultana, 10,000 piastres; four wives (cadines), at 15,000 piastres each. The total of the allowances to the two houses is thus 510,000 piastres per mensem, or about £51,000 yearly, the Turkish piastre being equivalent to 40 pence, or 16s. 6d.

FORTUNE AND THE BEGGAR.

(A RUSSIAN FABLE.)

A Beggar, who from door to door bore an old bag wherein to store the food whereon he coarsely fed,—Stale broken meats and crusts of bread, Grown weary of his vagrant life, With Fortune's evermore at strife, And envious of the rich and great, Who seemed the favourites of Fate, Was fain to curse their happier lot; "See!" said the Beggar, "they have got All dainty things for bed and board, And money too, an ample hoard, Enough, indeed, to last an age; And yet in commerce they engage, And take the risk of sea and shore, That Fortune may increase their store; A mighty partial goddess she! Pray, what has fortune done for me?" These words the goddess (who was near The grumbling Beggar) chanced to hear; Then stood before him in the way; "I've heard what you were pleased to say."

She answered; "prithes, now, attend; Fortune, for once, shall be your friend. You heap of shining ore behold! They're dross all, of purest gold; Now take as many as you will, But not enough your bag to fill, (For, faith! 'tis something over-large!) And listen while I further charge: The utmost care; if you let fall A single dross, straightway all (The gods decree—and they are just) Will in a moment turn to dust!" Elate with joy, the eager man The pleasant task at once began; And picked the drosses up so fast, The smiling goddess spoke at last, And bade the mendicant take heed Lest in his overweening greed The whole be lost. "Nay, never fear!" The Beggar said, "tis very clear My bag will hold a precious lot Besides the pieces I have got; I haven't dropt a single one; A little more—and I have done." While thus he spoke, the bag, alas! ('Twas old and thin) began to crack, And soon his gold the Beggar found A pile of dust upon the ground!

L'ENVOI.

Again the Beggar, as before, Plied his old trade from door to door; And, talking of his vanished pelf, ('Tis said) he never blamed himself, But, mindful of his faithless bag, Was fain to "curse the rotten rag!"

J. G. S.

GEMS.

CARE for what you say, or what you say will make you care.

Pack your cares in as small a space as you can, so that you can carry them yourself and not let them annoy others.

The water that has no taste is purest; the rain that has no odour is freshest; and of all the modifications of matter, the most generally pleasing to simplicity.

Don't be too severe upon yourself and your own failings; keep on, don't faint, be energetic to the last.

Men want restraining as well as propelling power. The good ship is provided with anchors as well as sails.

Bad luck is a man with his hands in his breeches' pockets, and a pipe in his mouth looking on to see how it will come. Good luck is a man to meet difficulties, his sleeves rolled up, and working to make it come right.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

BACHELORS' LOAF.—Four eggs, beat yolks and whites separately; one quart of warm milk; add one-fourth of a pound of butter. Stir in one pint of corn meal, and add the eggs after they are well beaten. Bake one-half hour in a moderately hot oven.

MUFFINS.—One quart of milk, two eggs, one tablespoonful of butter warmed with the milk, flour enough to make a batter that will drop rather thick from the spoon, a teaspoonful of salt, a pennyworth of baker's or a teaspoonful of home-made yeast. When very light bake in rings on a griddle.

HIGHLAND SOONES.—To a pound of flour allow from two to four ounces of butter, or lard, as much hot milk as will make a dough of the flour, and two beaten eggs, if the cakes are wished to rise. Handle quickly, and roll out and cut in any shape or size wanted. Bake on the griddle or in a thick-bottomed frying-pan. Must be served hot and eaten white fresh.

LEMON-PIE.—Take the juice and grated rind of one lemon, one cup of sugar, yolks of two eggs, three tablespoonfuls of flour, one pint of milk; after baking cover with a soft frosting made from the whites of two eggs, and four tablespoonfuls of sugar, and brown slightly.

STRAWN POTATOES.—Boil the potatoes till tender; cut them in thick slices; take half a teaspoonful of flour, a little salt and butter and chopped parsley, and a teaspoonful of milk; put them altogether in a saucepan, and let them stew about twenty minutes.

MISCELLANEOUS.

In the Mediterranean and on the coasts of Newfoundland the devil-fish sometimes attains a body length of six or seven feet, with tentacles twenty feet long, and two years ago one was discovered by some fishermen near Baffin Island, Comenars, the arms of which measured ten feet and the tentacles thirty feet.

There are in Europe and America about 50,000 women who belong to the Order of the Sisters of Charity.

A CHINESE plant which changes colour three times a day, has been received at the Jardin des Plantes, Paris.

A WOMAN 70 years old, and the owner of £1,000 worth of real estate in San Francisco, has been arrested in Oakland for begging.

MRS. ABBOT, the widow of the German Consul who was murdered by the Turks, at Salonica, has received £10,000 of the indemnity which the Porte was compelled to pay.

A VERY neat device for preventing burglary has just been brought out in the United States. All the doors in a bank are so arranged that they can only be opened when two knobs or handles are turned simultaneously. Now these knobs are in connection with powerful batteries. A thief seizes one knob and no effect follows. He then uses both his hands, taking a knob in each. Immediately his howls follow; he is unable to let the knobs go because of the violent muscular contractions set up. The torture is fearful, and the would-be robber constitutes in consequence—if he be a man of strong lungs—a most admirable alarm.

OUT of fourteen vessels composing the Behring's Sea whaling-fleet, twelve have been lost, and many of the crews have perished. The survivors had to undergo terrible sufferings before they effected their escape.

THERE has just been opened in London by Mr. Paterson (who has for some years carried on a similar institution in Edinburgh) a class for teaching ladies drawing and engraving on wood. The work has many advantages. It is clean, not laborious, may be carried on at home, and is fairly remunerative. From £1 to £5 a week may be earned at it, and really superior artists may get a good deal more.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS

ALFRED.—In order to obtain a divorce you must file a citation and cause the same to be duly advertised before you can proceed in court. This can only be done through a solicitor.

DON JUAN.—When two gentlemen meet a lady in public who is known only to one of them, the stranger must also salute, to avoid the appearance of singularity. But it is the etiquette for a lady in such a situation not to accost the gentleman known to her, and then the stranger unknown to her is relieved from the dilemma of either being rude, or saluting a person with whom he is totally unacquainted.

T. T.—Smoking immediately after meals will cause the face to flush.

S. E.—You are wrong.

OSWALD.—A servant cannot compel a master to give him a character. To refuse to give one to a servant who is fairly entitled to it is both cruel and unjust. But in all such cases the will of the employer is absolute.

G. S.—The Sublime Porte is the official title of the Government of the Ottoman Empire. Its derivation is said to be from a gate of the palace at Broussa, the original metropolis of the empire, called Bal Humayoon, the sublime gate.

G. L.—The true secret of happiness is to take it as it comes to us, moment by moment, in the little hourly rounds of our every-day duties.

F. K.—The clairvoyants are a tribe of impostors; like their brethren, the pill quack, their only object is to live upon the Peter Simples and Slenders of the day.

W.—Your lines are declined with thanks.

B. P. will do well to still continue under the counsel of her parent, and to try and win her father—who appears to be cold—over to her wishes. He will be the very best to place her trust in, and advise her how she may, if proper, obtain an interview with the young man she believes wishes for her company, and we think, if such is the fact, the young man is the proper person to make the proposal to you, and then obtain your consent to consult your parent and obtain his consent.

T. L.—Try very hard to get your parents reconciled to the match.

JESSIE.—We think you have gone quite far enough already.

ELLA says: "I am a young girl of sixteen, and am engaged to an old man of fifty-five, whom my mother is going to compel me to marry for his money; but I do not love him, for I have already given my heart to a young man two years my senior, and I do not think I could be happy with any one else. The day appointed for the wedding is not two weeks hence. Now, what I want to know is what I am to do. The young man whom I love is able to provide comfortably for me. We think of running away, as everything could be easily arranged, but I am undecided. I once had my fortune told, and it predicted that I was to have one great trial in my life, and if I adopted the proper course in it I should be happy ever afterwards, but I do not know which is the right course. I wish you would please tell me." Here are two evils—to marry a man without loving him, and to run away with a man without a mother's consent. The proverb says, "Choose the less." We say, "Choose neither;" absolutely refuse both, and you are not likely in a civilised community to be forced to either. We have no faith in fortune-tellers. The police should look after them.

ANNIE.—If he is a Christian he would tell you to do your duties in that condition in which you find yourself, and to think no more of him than as a friend. Of course the unmarried should love those whom they marry. But having married, such "discoveries" as you speak of are not to be made by a true, pure woman, and if any hint of them comes to the mind it is only to be spoken of to him, in asking wisdom, self-control, and steadfastness to right. The man whom you call a Christian we take to be a scoundrel.

D.—The symptoms you describe indicate a weak constitution.

H. N.—They are sold in shilling bottles and can be obtained of any chemist.

M.—He is evidently untrustworthy.

COSEMO.—Your face flushes in the evening and yet you never taste spirituous liquors. Very likely. The excitement undergone during the day produces nervous reaction, and probably, in avoiding one indulgence, you have plunged headlong into others.

A. S.—The tradition that "toads and venomous reptiles do not exist in Ireland" is a fiction. Notwithstanding that St. Patrick

Drove the frogs into the bogs,
And banish'd all the serpents,

these gentry are still extant in the Emerald Isle, notably in Leitrim and Fermanagh.

A. J.—Hurry is the mark of a weak mind; despatch of a strong one.

FRED.—Fourteen is the age for entry into the Royal Navy.

E.—Cover the surface of steel with soap, then write with aqua fortis.

OWEN.—You are too young to marry. Make some money first. The girl is right.

SALLY.—Unless the gentleman is betrothed to the young lady he should not attempt to kiss her, and every young lady would do perfectly right to resent such familiarity from any gentleman unless her betrothed or a near relative.

THE FIRST OF WINTER.

Oh! sadly sighs the win'try breeze
Along the desert sea;
And moaning 'mid the forest trees
It sings a dirge to me;
The solemn dirge of dying flowers—
The death song of the emerald bowers—
The first loud whistled lay,
Which summons Winter's stormy powers
On his coronation day.

Darker and darker grows the sky;
With voice more loud and louder still
The stormy winds sweep by, and fill
The ear with awful melody.
Each tone of that majestic harp
Wakes other tones within to warp
My soul away, amid its base,
To the greenwood, which lately was
A picture to my eye—
Which now is mure and bare! Alas!
Its sere leaves rustle by!

But ah! that tempest music tells
A tale which saddens more—
Of hearts it tells where sorrow dwells
On many a rocky shore,
When the poor bark is dashed and driven,
And plunged below, and tossed to Heaven,
And oh! its wild and varied song
Hath an appalling power,
As awfully it sweeps along
O'er broken tree and blasted flower.

The loud, loud laugh of frenzied lips,
The sigh of sorrowing breath,
The dread, dread crash of sinking ships,
The gurgling shriek of death,
Affection's wildest, warmest wish,
Devotion's holiest cry,
Are blended with that maddening blast,
And on the chords of sympathy
Their varying accents now are cast.

Yet more—it tells of more—
Of him who on his murky wing
Rides calmly, and directs its roar,
Or stills it with His nod;
Its voice is raised even now to sing
A wilder melody to Heaven,
Who holds it in night's silent hush
Within the hollow of his hand,
Or bids it from His presence rush
In desolation o'er the land:
At his command alone it raves
O'er roofless coasts and tumbling waves.

B. S. E.

HETIA and **STELLA**, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen, tall and dark. Sailors preferred. Hetia is nineteen, blue eyes, brown hair, and medium height. Stella is seventeen, brown hair and eyes.

JANNY, twenty-four, tall, brown hair and eyes, of a loving disposition, thoroughly domesticated, would like to correspond with a young gentleman about her own age. Respondent must be tall, dark, and holding a good situation.

EMILY, eighteen, tall, with light brown hair and blue eyes, would like to correspond with a young gentleman of a loving disposition.

J. W. R. would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. He is twenty-two, fair complexion, good-tempered, thoroughly domesticated, and considered good-looking.

EMILY and **SARAH**, two friends, wish to correspond with two young men, tall and light. Both have dark brown hair and eyes, medium height.

EDITH and **NORA**, two friends, would like to correspond with two dark young gentlemen. Edith is eighteen, tall, light hair and blue eyes. Nora is seventeen, medium height, brown hair, and blue eyes. Both are domesticated, and of a loving disposition. Respondents must be in good positions, and fond of home.

M. M., eighteen, wishes to correspond with a young lady about seventeen. She must be good-looking, the medium height, blue eyes, and of a very loving disposition.

WALTER and **ELLIOT**, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies about seventeen. Both are twenty-one, tall, dark hazel eyes, and good-looking.

ADA, twenty, medium height, dark, considered good-looking, would like to correspond with a widower with two children.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

CARRIE is responded to by—**Edgar George C.** Would like to receive carte-de-visite.

LAUGHING EXES by—**Buntin**, who thinks he is all she requires.

HAPPY FACE by—**Purser's Dip**, twenty-two, fair, brown eyes.

FEMOZERORE by—**Maggie**, who thinks she is all he requires.

MARIA by—**Nom de Plume**, nineteen, medium height, fair, Auburn hair, dark brown eyes considered good-looking.

AGNES by—**B. M.**, seventeen. Would like to exchange carte-de-visite.

KATE by—**Edmonson**, twenty-seven, dark complexion, and educated.

WHITE MOSS ROSE by—**A Widower**, thirty, and respectable.

W. P. by—**Annie**, twenty-four, medium height, dark hair, fair complexion, fond of home, and very domesticated.

SCARLET by—**Bluebell**, twenty-two, medium height, and brown hair.

TERENCE by—**Daisy**, nineteen, rather below medium height, brown hair, gray eyes, of a loving disposition, and fond of home.

W. P. by—**Primrose**, twenty-three, medium height, dark brown hair, of a loving disposition, and fond of home.

M. by—**Tom**, eighteen.

FLORENCE by—**Ernest**, twenty-one, tall, dark complexion, dark hair, hazel eyes, thoroughly domesticated, and fond of home.

MAY by—**M. T.**, eighteen.

LAURA AMY by—**Constant Reader**, dark complexion, and considered good-looking. Thinks he is all she requires.

MARIA by—**Printer**, nineteen, dark hair and eyes, and fond of home and music. Would like to exchange carte-de-visite.

RIGHT CLAMP by—**Rose**, medium height, tall, dark, considered good-looking, fond of home, and of a loving disposition.

EMILY by—**Joe**, twenty-one, tall, blue eyes, and light hair.

TED by—**Kate**.

POLLY P. by—**Alfred W.**, nineteen, very short, dark hair, and very handsome.

M. T. by—**Nelly**, eighteen, dark complexion, light blue eyes.

TOM by—**Clara**, seventeen, fair, blue eyes, and light hair.

MAY by—**Alfred**, twenty-nine.

LEFT LEVER by—**Lily**, medium height, tall, dark, considered good-looking, fond of home, and of a loving disposition.

TOM W. by—**Edith**, eighteen, dark hair, hazel eyes, medium height, good-tempered, and fond of home and children.

JACK M. by—**Maggie H.**, seventeen, dark, good-tempered, medium height, and very fond of home and children.

BESSIE T. by—**Charley**, eighteen, dark hair and eyes, considered good-looking. Would like to receive carte-de-visite.

BON by—**G. S.**

LAURA by—**J. H.**, twenty, a seaman in the Royal Navy, considered good-looking, and thinks he is all she requires.

D. M. by—**Don Quixote**, twenty-five, dark hair and eyes.

SARAH J. by—**Plato**, twenty. Would like to exchange carte-de-visite.

ALF by—**T. M.**, twenty-one.

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London: Published for the Proprietor at 331, Strand, by G. A. SMITH.